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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-077 *21 April 1995*

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Inter-Arab Affairs

League Chief Congratulates al-Qadhdhafi on Resolution

NC2004210595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1945 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 20 Apr (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has congratulated Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, on the Security Council resolution allowing the Libyan pilgrims to travel by air to the holy lands to perform the pilgrimage.

The Arab League secretary general affirmed in a message he sent to al-Qadhdhafi today delivered by Ibrahim al-Bishari, Libya's permanent representative to the Arab League, that this resolution received large-scale Arab and Islamic support.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid also affirmed the complete solidarity of the Arab countries with Libya and its support for efforts to reach a peaceful solution to the high-pressure measures and threats the Libyan people are being subjected to. He expressed his belief that these efforts will eventually lead to lifting the sanctions imposed on Libya.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 14 Apr

NC1804120495

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 14 April edition of the Arabic-language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Vanguards of Conquest Defense Denied Entry to Court
2. Security Agencies' 'Scheme' Against Muslim Brotherhood Deplored
3. Writer Examines Israeli Nuclear Threat

VANGUARDS OF CONQUEST DEFENSE DENIED ENTRY TO COURT

A 200-word unattributed report on pages 1 and 6 says "security forces prevented the defense panel in the Vanguards of Conquest case from entering the court, claiming that the trial has ended." The defense lawyers issued a statement, affirming that they headed for the court at 9 on the morning of 12 April and were denied entry, the report says. The statement pointed out that the measure "casts doubt on the soundness of the trial procedures."

The military court postponed the trial to 16 April due to the defense lawyers' absence, the report notes.

SECURITY AGENCIES' 'SCHEME' AGAINST MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD DEPLORED

A 2,000-word article by Mahfuz 'Azzam on page 7 raps the "serious terrorist scheme" that he says is "engineered and directed by the State Security Detectives" against the Muslim Brotherhood. The article refers to press reports on "the arrest of four people said to be Brotherhood leaders" last week.

Noting that all the newspapers published the same report word for word, he deduces that "it was a statement distributed to the newspapers," which claimed that the Doctors Association's Humanitarian Relief Committee was used as a channel to send young Brotherhood cadres abroad under the cover of relief work within the framework of a terrorist scheme.

'Azzam defends the committee, which "honored every Egyptian when governments were sluggish...providing food, medicine, clothing, and firewood to millions of women, children and old people."

He contends that the Egyptian Government "refused to receive refugees, displaced children, and even sick people who needed treatment and girls who were molested or raped."

Stating that it is a Doctors Association's duty to relieve those who need help, he notes that the committee was among the primary relief agencies that won the full respect, cooperation, and support of the United Nations in Bosnia, Somalia, and Africa. He adds that the primary credit for this goes to Dr. Ashraf 'Abd-al-Ghaffar, to whom press reports refer as "the fugitive Muslim Brotherhood leader," who risked his own life to perform his humanitarian mission.

'Azzam says that the security agencies that "were involved in fabricating and directing the case" are thus leaving the door wide open to every humanitarian and international organization to take a hostile position against the regime in Egypt."

The writer points out that the entire issue is designed to "get rid of the active elements in trade unions before the coming elections."

WRITER EXAMINES ISRAELI NUCLEAR THREAT

A 3,000-word article by 'Adil Husayn on page 5 examines Israel's nuclear threat, both to the Arab and Western worlds.

He notes that the conference to establish the principle "of the indefinite prohibition" of the possession of nuclear power by any state other than America, Russia, Israel, China, France, or Britain opens on 17 April. He maintains that "the Egyptian Government's slackness played a vital role in establishing that unfair terrorist principle," when it went back on its position and thus "guaranteed the majority required to pass the principle."

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Husayn points out that the six nuclear states "want to make up for their economic and political weakness before Germany and Japan by monopolizing nuclear weapons as a means of threat and blackmail." He explains that the nuclear threat gives the United States "considerable ability" to influence world economic relations in its favor. He concludes here: "We are not alone in the international confrontation with the arrogant nuclear tyrants."

But Husayn adds that the case of the Arabs and Israel is "very special and peculiar" in this general confrontation. He remarks that Israel is "a deformed midget, whose head is not in proportion with his body," explaining that the size of its missiles, planes, and satellites is not in proportion with its population and area.

He asserts that "Zionist leaders" lie when they announce their willingness to destroy their nuclear arsenal once they conclude peace talks with their neighbors, maintaining that what they want is "to hold negotiations under the nuclear threat, for which we have no deterrent, and to maintain this mighty force to perpetuate our submission."

Husayn maintains that the "Zionist nuclear weapons" pose a threat to international security as a whole, since they do not need all those nuclear missiles to strike at their neighbors and endanger their own people. He quotes a member of the British House of Commons, as he states that Israel claims to have "6 million reasons" why it should maintain its nuclear weapons. These are the 6 million Jews said to have been killed in Europe. He states: "The Zionists are actually seeking to set up a Zionist fifth column in any state so that they can betray the state in which they reside in full arrogance and direct their missiles at any state that objects." He notes that Israel bans reference to its nuclear power in international studies.

The writer adds that European ambassadors "bashfully" appealed to Israel to "show goodwill toward the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty." In contrast, he says, Israel is trying to "convince Europe that the real threat to its interests and security comes from the Islamic revival." To refute that allegation, Husayn explains that the Islamic threat to Europe is basically represented in possible emigration from the south of the Mediterranean. But, he adds, the Islamic revival "curbs this movement, since north Africans only emigrate when they lose hope of an improvement in their standard of living and because of the lack of development." He says he believes the Islamists' serious development plans will attract emigrants back to share in the revival.

Husayn maintains that the Israeli nuclear threat is "impossible to prevent or ignore" and that the Zionist scheme seeks to expand in the Arab, Islamic region "to take charge of its keys and make every deal with its economic and political establishments pass through the Israeli gate." He points out that this certainly conflicts with European interests.

He asserts that the Israeli threat to oil-rich areas in the Gulf and other regions "terrifies not Europe and Japan alone, but the United States as well, which will import two thirds of its oil with the beginning of the new century." He asks how the United States, "which released that demon" and no longer controls it, can feel safe, particularly since Israeli nuclear missiles can reach American cities.

Husayn then cites a report published by MA'ARIV to show the extent of Jewish domination of America. The report uses the term "warm Jews" to describe Jews who are completely loyal to Israel. According to MA'ARIV, "among 11 officials in the U.S. National Security Council there are seven warm Jews, whom Clinton put in charge of sensitive positions in national security and foreign policy areas." Husayn also notes the Zionist control of U.S. media.

But the writer points out that the United States "has not fallen totally into Zionist hands." He states that what he calls "this Zionist domination," which harms national interests, will one day trigger angry reactions within the United States. To speed up such reaction, Husayn suggests that our region should counter the ongoing "schemes" and "prove to the Americans that their interests will truly be harmed rather than served by the blind alliance with the Zionists." The same thing goes for Europe and Japan. With determination, we can establish an expansive alliance with these powers against nuclear arrogance in general and the Zionist threat in particular, he says.

In a final word to citizens, Husayn says: Confronting the enemy is a duty. But this will not come about if corrupt, inefficient, and negligent people remain in control of the ruling and decisionmaking process.

Palestinian Affairs

Group Threatens Attacks on 'Jewish' Targets

TA2004162395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An unknown organization calling itself the Islamic Salvation Front, which is apparently a faction of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] or the Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip, has distributed a leaflet threatening to attack Jewish targets around the world. The leaflet states that if the arrests of Islamic Jihad activists continue, the group's members will harm Zionist interests throughout the world, American Jewish leaders, Jewish Agency offices in Europe, and the Israeli embassies in Egypt, Britain, and France. This was reported by our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem.

Further on Threat

NC2004200095 Paris AFP in English 1858 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, April 20 (AFP)—An unknown group Thursday [20 April] threatened to strike

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at Jewish and Israeli centers worldwide if the Palestinian self-rule authority continued its crackdown against Muslim radicals.

A statement sent to news agencies and signed by the "Islamic Front for the Salvation of Palestine" threaten to call on its "mujahedeen" or holy fighters in Egypt, Algeria, France, Britain and the United States to "hit at Zionist interests and Jewish symbols everywhere."

Included in its potential targets were the Israeli embassy buildings in France, Britain and Egypt as well as the Jewish Agency in Europe.

The statement was the second issued by the group whose members and location remain unknown. The first was an anti-Israeli warning about two weeks ago.

"The Islamic Front places on (PLO chief Yasir) 'Arafat responsibility for incidents resulting from the continuing detention of mujahedeen in Gaza central jail," said the five-point statement.

It also warned that it would hit at Israeli collaborators if they did not repent within 60 days.

Sources at the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and the smaller Islamic Jihad said they knew nothing of the group and distanced themselves from its threats.

Unlike statements issued by Islamist groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the front's communique did not refer to verses from the Koran and was written in poor Arabic.

Palestinian police launched a crackdown on Muslim militants after two suicide bombings killed seven Israelis and an American woman in the Gaza Strip on April 9.

Police have released about 90 detainees from Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the past few days but more than 100 remain behind bars.

'Arafat Said Considering Resigning Due to Stress

JN2004153595 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 17 Apr 95 p 36

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo—A senior Cairo-based Arab diplomatic source has asserted that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat informed the Egyptian officials with whom he met during his recent visit to Egypt late last week that he has been seriously contemplating resigning since the bomb blasts in Gaza almost 10 days ago, particularly in view of the physical and mental health worries he is currently suffering. This has rendered him unable to keep things under control in the self-rule areas.

In a statement to AL-ITTIHAD, the source added that 'Arafat had literally told the Egyptians: "Please, do not be surprised if I tender my resignation at any time, for my sorrows and concerns have increased. I prefer to resign and live permanently in Morocco, where I would be hosted by King Hassan II, who would welcome me and my family there. There, I would be safe and enjoy the care of the family of King Hassan, with whom I am bound by strong links."

The source indicated that a lengthy discussion took place during the meeting between 'Arafat and the Egyptian officials. One official asked 'Arafat to stop contemplating such a decision, and not to make it, particularly since it would seriously jeopardize the peace process and the situation in the self-rule areas. The official added that this could prompt Israel to go back on its pledges regarding the provisions enshrined in the Declaration of Principles.

Nonetheless, 'Arafat retorted, saying: "I have accomplished my task. I have done enough to promote the cause of my people. It is time for me to rest. My health problems have increased, and so have my burdens. I no longer sleep at night for fear that unexpected events and developments could occur any time. I am no longer capable of restraining my nerves."

'Arafat Asks Hamas for 2-Year Halt to Violence

MM2004161995 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Apr 95 p 3

[Report by Mahmud Abu-'Id: "Palestinian President Asks Hamas To Give Him Two Years"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem—Sources in the Islamic Resistance Movement "Hamas" have revealed that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has asked this movement's leaders to give him two years to consolidate political conditions and implement the agreements signed with Israel. He pleaded with them to halt their armed activities until the end of this period. This revelation coincides with reports of a meeting held in the house of Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, Hamas leader in the Gaza Strip, following a visit to him by al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary of the self-rule authority council, Zakariyya al-Agha, minister of housing, and three Fatah leaders.

It has also been revealed that a meeting was held yesterday in Gaza between Mahmud Karim, Egypt's representative to the Palestinian Authority, and Hamas leaders. The meeting is believed to have dealt with 'Arafat's request for the two-year period. Sayyid Abu-Musamih, a Hamas leader who participated in the meeting, said that it was held at the two sides' request. But he declined to reveal what was discussed at the meeting. He just said that "Hamas presented its view regarding the Oslo agreement and subsequent political events, and its opinion on ways of calming the situation in the Gaza Strip."

Dr. al-Zahhar confirmed the report about the meeting with the Egyptian representative. He said that it was held "on the basis of Egypt's role in the Gaza Strip and its endeavors to establish relations with all political forces." He pointed to the background of Hamas' relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, which maintains good relations with the authorities in Cairo, in contrast

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with the other extremist fundamentalist movements waging a war against the Egyptian Government.

Christopher Message to 'Arafat Restates Commitment

JN2004133895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat this morning received a message from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher restating the U.S. commitment to supporting the Middle East peace process.

Islamic Jihad Denies Readiness To Halt Military Operations

JN2004134095 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement today, the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine denied that it has expressed readiness to halt military activities and to surrender its arms. It said that these are false and baseless claims.

Information yesterday said that a dialogue between the Palestinian Authority and the Islamic Jihad in Gaza has resulted in proposals by the movement to halt operations in the self-rule area in Gaza.

DFLP Leader: Attacks on Israel Will Continue

TA2004102295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Ali Abu-Hilal, a leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] in the territories, has said that the rejectionist organizations will continue to attack Israel because their political level does not control the military levels. According to him, as long as the settlements are not removed it will be very hard to halt these attacks.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that Abu-Hilal believes the Palestinian Authority will fail to collect illegal weapons in the Gaza Strip, and if it tries to do so tension will intensify between it and the Palestinian opposition groups.

PFLP Breakaway Group Formed on West Bank

TA1604135495 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 16 Apr 95 p A5

[Report by Ori Nir]

[FBIS Translated Text] A group of youths from the West Bank, who had broken away from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], last week set up a new political body, which contrary to the PFLP's official line, plans to operate inside the Palestinian Authority [PA] and compete in the elections for the PA's council. The name of the new body is the Palestinian National Democratic Coalition, and it includes several youths from the southern West Bank.

The leading member is Firuz Yari, former head of the Bethlehem University Student Union. Yari and his colleagues left the PFLP before setting up the new group. Therefore, they say, they are not a PFLP splinter group, rather a new political body without links to the PFLP, even though former PFLP members belong to it.

People identified with the PFLP on the West Bank said that so far it is a small group and does not have many cadres in the territories, but according to a leading PFLP activist "its platform has huge potential." People identified with the PFLP explain that there is a sharp dispute between PFLP supporters on the path that it should take.

Several disputed issues have cropped up. One is whether to continue as an underground organization or to become a public movement. Another is whether to become part of the PA's bureaucracy, as people identified with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], have done. A public opinion poll conducted in the territories recently showed that 51 percent of PFLP supporters believe opposition organizations should join the PA and that only 42 percent oppose it.

Another disputed issue is whether to participate in the PA's council elections. That is the main issue today, according to PFLP activists. A poll carried out recently showed that 74 percent of PFLP supporters in the territories plan to boycott the elections and that only 22 percent plan to participate.

Those opposed to participation in the elections say that it would be an expression of support for the Oslo and Cairo accords, which the PFLP has opposed. Others say that nonparticipation in the elections will leave the political arena entirely to other political factions. Some of them suggest permitting people identified with the PFLP to present their candidacy for elections on a personal basis, without officially identifying themselves as PFLP candidates.

PFLP-GC's Jibril on Iran, 'Operations,' Arad

'Part One'

JN2004094595 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 3-9 Apr 95 pp 10-16

["Part one" of interview with PFLP-GC Secretary General Ahmad Jibril by Ghassan Sharbal in Damascus; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Sharbal] When did your relationship start with Iran?

[Jibril] When the Khomeyni-led popular revolution broke out against the shah, we sided with the Iranian people. We hated the shah and considered him a traitor to Arab and Islamic causes. Since the mid-1970's, we had been in contact with Iranian factions and parties that

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opposed him. We trained them and provideed them with some logistical support, especially in the field of telecommunications.

[Sharbal] Where did you train them? In southern Lebanon?

[Jibril] In different places. Our main concern was to see the fall of the shah. The factions were leftist, leftist-Muslim, or Muslim. I do not want to go into details. When Imam Khomeyni and the revolution achieved victory in 1979, I said to myself that God had given us a new ally to make up for the loss of the Egypt of Anwar al-Sadat. Since the first day of the victory of the Islamic revolution, we have stood by it. When the relationship between the revolution and Iraq started to strain, we spared no method to advise our brothers in Iraq not to provoke the Islamic revolution in Iran and not to create difficulties for it. I recall that during one of my official meetings with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, I told him: Iraq can now move west, because the shah is finished in north of Iraq. Now, you should shift your weight toward Palestine. This was in 1980. Even after the provocations started, we did our best to stop the deterioration.

When the war broke out, we declared an unambiguous stand toward the Iraqi regime. Iraq is fighting a losing war, even if it emerges victorious, we said. The war is a loss for the Arabs and Muslims. We conveyed this view to the Iraqi officials whom we met then. We rejected the justifications they advanced to continue the war. We told them that this was an imperialist game, supported by some countries, whose aim is that neither you nor Iran emerge victorious. The aim of this game is to defeat the two parties and to deplete their resources to promote the interests of others. Then, we stepped up our opposition to the regime in Iraq in favor of the Islamic revolution, especially since this revolution raised clear slogans about the Palestinian cause and the conflict between the Muslims and the Zionists.

[Sharbal] Did you meet Imam Khomeyni?

[Jibril] Yes, I met him a short while before he passed away. It was a courtesy visit, because his health situation did not allow more than that.

[Sharbal] With whom do you have a relationship in Iran?

[Jibril] This relationship is not with a particular agency in the Islamic revolution. It is with the Revolution Guards, the Republic's Presidency, and the Foreign Ministry. We are proud that the leaders of the Islamic revolution did not disappoint us. They have not changed their political slant toward the Palestinian cause and the conflict between us and Zionism. They have not changed at all. The relationship has been from the start a political one. We always look for the common political denominators between us and those with whom we want to establish friendships. We, as an organization, do not look for resources before we find a common political understanding.

You are aware that an unjust war had been imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran for 8 years. The war depleted much of Iran's capabilities. After the war, the Islamic Republic of Iran was subjected to a blockade from the United States and many other countries. This blockade is continuing. Iran is today experiencing severe economic crises. Therefore, we have never based our relationship with Iran on any material aid they may offer us. In spite of this, they have repeatedly offered us some limited aid, especially by adopting the families of martyrs. We are sure that when the blockade is lifted and the economic situation improves, then they will not refrain from offering aid.

We meet with Islamic leaders in Iran on all levels. I have an intimate and personal relationship with 'Ali Khamene'i, the revolution's guide, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Guard Commander General Mohsen Reza'i, and many others.

[Sharbal] Was this relationship the road to field coordination with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Hizballah?

[Jibril] No doubt, our relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran has brought us closer to Hizballah.

[Sharbal] Did you take part in training Hizballah personnel?

[Jibril] No. Hizballah does not need our training. But we work together on combat operations. The enemy knows about this. Through our alliances with the Libyan Jamahiriyah, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Syria, and some struggling Palestinian factions, such as Hamas, the [Islamic] Jihad, and Hizballah, we in the front feel that we have many political denominators. [passage omitted]

[Sharbal] Did you go to prison?

[Jibril] Many times, especially in Syria.

[Sharbal] Your relationship with Syria is a firm principle in your policy.

[Jibril] Our relationship with Syria is not based on the fact that we are Palestinians who reside in Syria. If I were living elsewhere, I would be seeking a geopolitics that enables me to pursue my struggle. For more than 25 years, we have been aware that Syria, with its educated people who adhere to the Palestinian cause, is our home, because we have said from the beginning that we are not the children of Sykes-Picot. We considered Bilad al-Sham and the Fertile Crescent to be one unit. We pinned great hopes on Syria because of its past and present historical status. When I address thousands of our people at a large rally, for example, or say in a press interview in response to questions—whether the Syrian leadership would abandon the Palestine question and normalize its ties with Israel according to a certain deal—that President Hafiz al-Asad, whom I have known for 30 years, carries the burden of Syria's ancient and modern history, this is not meaningless talk. [passage omitted]

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[Sharbal] What about the issue of gliders?

[Jibril] The Israelis had set up a strong security barrier. America gave them all the necessary advanced technology. The status of Arab technology is well known, regrettably. I will not divulge a secret if I say that during one of my visits to Moscow, I asked the Soviets to provide us with the technological means to break the barrier set up by Israel. They could not give us a solution to break the barrier that extended from al-Naqurah to Elat. Even at sea, they had deployed eavesdropping devices, radar that operates on temperature differences, night vision binoculars, and other sophisticated means.

The Zionist entity regards its security as one of its most important foundations. This is why it had spent a lot of money on this barrier to prevent the infiltration of fedayeens and strugglers. In view of this, we started to think about using the air. Our objective was to engage them in combat, as we recently did in al-Tayyibah in southern Lebanon. We know that we achieve victory when we engage them.

[Sharbal] Where were the gliders manufactured?

[Jibril] You may find it strange if I tell you that they were homemade. We manufactured them by using our own resources. We trained the people with our own resources, and we sustained losses during the training.

[Sharbal] Where did you train them, away from the eyes of the Israelis?

[Jibril] We did the training in several places. The important thing is that such a plane, which athletes use in Europe, does not usually have an engine. We equipped it with an engine so it became similar to an ordinary plane. Athletes say that the plane should be used in a perfectly clear weather. We had planned to fly at night, and this required compasses and equipment.

[Sharbal] Were you not aided by foreign experts?

[Jibril] Absolutely not. I challenge anyone who claims this. The training was exhausting. We also had to train the pilots to fly together in formations to reach a target 30 or 50 km away, and to land at the same time. It was a complicated mission. After the Qibyah glider operation, an Israeli pilot was quoted as saying: "No doubt they are crazy; or they could have achieved a very fine level of training." The operation took place on a pitch-black night. The youths reached their target and fought bravely. This was on 25 November 1987. Qibyah is a Palestinian village in the West Bank, in which the Jews had committed a massacre. This is why we named this operation Qibyah. The target was a camp for the Golani Brigade in the Galilee.

[Sharbal] Where did they set out from?

[Jibril] From southern Lebanon, and specifically from al-'Urqub.

[Sharbal] How did you move the gliders without Israel knowing about this?

[Jibril] They were made from cloth and you can transport them in a taxi. During the operation, I deliberately traveled to Libya so as to divert the attention of the Israeli intelligence. This is especially since they had been saying a couple of months before that the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] possesses gliders and is carrying some activities at night and moving helicopters.

Incidentally, some of the statements made by 'Arafat helped the Israelis. 'Arafat said, for example, that Ahmad Jibril had received helicopters, gliders, and boats from Iran. Of course, we did not have helicopters. My trip to Libya was meant to mislead and deceive the Israelis.

Our youths attacked a camp which the Israelis called "Heroes Camp." They were three fighters. They killed the guards. Then, they saw the sleeping quarters of Israeli service women. Some of them were sleeping naked. They closed the door and did not shoot them. They left for the other quarters and the club where there was a cafeteria. In the end, the camp was subjected to a large-scale sabotage operation and the three youths were martyred.

[Sharbal] How many PFLP-GC members have been martyred until this minute?

[Jibril] They total 2,300 martyrs from 1956 until today. [passage omitted]

'Part Two'

JN2004115395 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 10-16 Apr 95 pp 29-34

["Part two" of interview with PFLP-GC Secretary General Ahmad Jibril by Ghassan Sharbal in Damascus; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Sharbal] Did you have anything to do with the foreign hostage-taking on Lebanese territory?

[Jibril] Never. We did not have any program on this issue. There was a single incident in Lebanon. We arrested by accident a black U.S. colonel during the two-year war (1975-1977). No one knew of this incident. We treated him well, and discussed with him the question of racial discrimination in the United States and the world. He responded favorably, in spite of the fact that he admitted being a CIA member. In exchange for his release, we asked for aid to be sent to the Kurds area, the destitute al-Karantina area and the 'Arab al-Maslakh area [in Beirut]

Pressure was brought to bear on us and people voiced doubts about us. They said that we were holding the prisoner. Zuhayr Muhsin tried to interfere, but we refused and asked that in exchange for the release of the U.S. prisoner, 200 truckloads of rice, sugar, flour, and ghee should be sent to al-Karantina and 'Arab al-Maslakh areas to be distributed among their destitute inhabitants. This demand was carried out. The trucks

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were sent and we released him. We did not ask for anything else in exchange for his release.

[Sharbal] Had you had anything to do with the foreign hostages, such as offering limited assistance?

[Jibril] No. We never thought about such an issue. In September 1970, when we were confronting Jordan, our colleagues in Beirut kidnapped Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali (former Jordanian prime minister) who later signed the [peace] agreement with Israel and who is married to an American. When we heard of this incident, we asked Abu-Firas (Fadl Shururu) to go to Beirut where he handed him over to the Jordanian embassy. We did this in spite of the fact that we were waging a battle at the time. His kidnapping was an individual action. Al-Majali is alive. They had taken him in his pajamas and barefoot. He was returned fully dressed.

Sometimes, we jokingly say that had he been liquidated, the agreement would not have been signed. But, we also say that the Jordanian regime would have found thousands like 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali. We do not want to be accused of such a thing. We are freedom-fighters and this is not for us. When we fight, we do not hesitate to say that we are doing so. [passage omitted]

[Sharbal] You met Carlos a few years ago for two hours. What was the purpose of the meeting? What did he propose to you?

[Jibril] He wanted to get to know us. This took place many years ago. However, we did not cooperate with him. I told him that his program is different from ours. We told him: We do not criticize or condemn your program, but we do not encourage it. We have had our course for 25 years.

You would be surprised to learn that during the first years, I used to avoid striking at Israeli civilians when I issued battle orders, in spite of the fact that I knew it would be difficult to dissociate between the military and the civilian because all of them are reserve soldiers, whether men and women. In 1966, 1967, and 1968 we did our best to target Israeli soldiers. This was difficult because we had limited anti-armor weapons and they used to move around in personnel carriers. We used to improvise with the issue of mines. When their aircraft began raiding civilians, we viewed this as a natural thing.

[Sharbal] As the head of PFLP-GC [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command], didn't you carry out operations outside the theater of operations in the region, in Europe or America for example?

[Jibril] No. That's why when the Lockerbie issue took place, I used to frankly say: Let the French and British intelligence services which belong to two big powers say whether we had carried out any activities on their territories. We act on the European arena in a manner that serves our battle in Palestine. For example, we used to send weapons and military hardware to the occupied territories in cars that were imported from Germany on vessels with Haifa or Ashdod ports as their destination.

[Sharbal] What about the story of the cafe in Germany?

[Jibril] We have nothing to do with it. After the strike against civilians in Libya in 1986, some of our groups tried to act independently of the central commands. We captured those groups. There was an attempt to blow up a train that was transporting U.S. servicemen in Germany.

[Sharbal] Did you arrest the planners?

[Jibril] No. We told them: You are not allowed to act without command orders. They were enthusiastic because U.S. aircraft were killing women and children in Libya.

[Sharbal] It has been reported that you own a detonating device that was used in the Lockerbie incident and that you manufacture such devices.

[Jibril] We have devices, and we have scientific laboratories that produce such devices daily. But these—as experts know—can be used for one purpose or another. This is a weapon that can be used for defense or offense. And you can use it for assassinations and other things. This is a scientific invention which you can use for many purposes against ships, aircraft, or cars in the West Bank. These are different scientific issues and experts know about them.

[Sharbal] Do you say that you have nothing to do with the Lockerbie issue?

[Jibril] Yes, we have nothing to do with it. The Americans know this, despite their skepticism. They say that even if there were Libyans (among the perpetrators), the PFLP-GC trained them. I think that the Lockerbie issue is more a political issue than a criminal case. Otherwise, how do we explain the fact that the Americans remained silent over hundreds of thousands of similar stories? Take, for example, the Korean plane downed by the Russians, the Libyan plane downed by the Israelis over the Suez Canal, and the Iranian Airbus which was downed. Why don't they raise a hue and cry over these? [passage omitted]

[Sharbal] How did your relationship with Libya and with Colonel al-Qadhdhafi in particular begin?

[Jibril] Since our establishment as an organization in 1959 under the name "Palestine Liberation Front," we...

[Sharbal, interrupting] Did this organization have any relationship with the Movement of Arab Nationalists?

[Jibril] No, not at all. Many people make a mistake when thy think that we were with George Habash. He belonged to a different school altogether. Our comrades had sharp differences with the Movement of Arab Nationalists at universities. George Habash believed that unity is our way to repatriation; we said that unity and repatriation have a dialectical relationship. That is, if you work for the Palestinian cause, then you will be expediting Arab unity, and when you struggle for Arab unity, then you are expediting the liberation of Palestine. Therefore, there is no need for this mechanical separation. George Habash, along with the Movement of Arab Nationalists, was advocating unity as a way for repatriation.

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[Sharbal] Did you know George Habash then?

[Jibril] Not personally.

[Sharbal] When did you first meet him?

[Jibril] We met in Damascus in 1967, one or two months after the defeat.

[Sharbal] Did you also meet 'Arafat then?

[Jibril] 'Arafat and I are very old acquaintances. In 1965 or 1964, we shared a political view that we cannot build political relations with conservative regimes. If we wanted to have relations, then they must be with nationalist, progressive, pan- Arab, or revolutionary regimes.

When the 1 September revolution broke out in Libya and began to raise slogans—the password it used during the coup was Jerusalem—we were intrigued by the slogans raised by those vigorous young people. So we decided to get in touch with them through two persons. The first was Adam al-Hawwaz, who was defense minister right after the revolution. He was a former officer and colleague of mine in Egypt. He was dismissed a few months later. He was not one of the revolution's leaders. The second was a young Algerian struggler, who played a role in establishing our relationship with Libya. I traveled to Libya and met with the revolution's leaders. I met with them for many days; we used to spend most of the night together. I spoke to all the revolution's leaders and told them about the problems we, the Palestinians, were facing in our combat with the Israeli enemy, especially the electronic barrier and the fortifications along the Palestinian borders to isolate the Palestinians inside from those outside, especially in Jordan. [passage omitted]

My discussion with the young leaders of the Libyan revolution was meant to see whether they could help us overcome this barrier. I explained the situation to them. I had several maps with me. After three days they were convinced. They said: What can we do for you? I said: You can buy us at least four of five helicopters by which we can fly from the Jordanian mountains we control in Irbid, 'Ajlun, Jarash, al-Salt, and al-Karak, so we can reach our people in Ramallah, Nabulus, or Hebron within minutes. They said: We do not have such small aircraft, but we can give you some money to buy them from Italy and then you can train your personnel. Within 10 days, they remitted $3 million for this plan through the Arab Bank in Amman.

So we started to think about ways to buy those helicopters. They had told us that they didn't mind shipping the helicopters to Libya and then shipping them to us through Syria or any other Arab country. While we were thinking about how to buy the helicopters and train our pilots how to fly them, we were surprised that news of this money had leaked to 'Arafat. 'Arafat went to Egypt and asked Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal, who was editor in chief of AL-AHRAM then, to go to Libya to ask the Libyans to halt the financial aid to us, on the pretext that this could fragment the Palestinian revolution. They tried to tarnish my reputation. They told Haykal: Ahmad Jibril is an arms dealer, and not a struggler. As Colonel al-Qadhdhafi told me, Haykal visited him and told him that was a serious issue, because the money would be used in arms dealing and would not go to the revolution. When I received news about this and how some members of the Libyan leadership were disappointed because someone had fooled them and taken money from them, I returned the money to Libya and to Colonel al-Qadhdhafi, despite the fact that we were in dire need of $10 or $20, not to mention thousands or millions of dollars. [passage omitted]

We always felt that the brothers in the 1 September revolution were faithful to the Palestinian cause. We know that this cause is the blood that runs in their veins. This made us love them deeply. Our relationship continued. They offered us a great deal of arms and hardware before and after the 1982 Israeli invasion. At present, our weapons are Libyan. We used to supply some Lebanese and Palestinian factions with these weapons, including the currently active resistance movement in southern Lebanon. We received these Libyan weapons over the past years and we will keep them as souvenirs.

[Sharbal] Have the Libyans offered you money?

[Jibril] Yes, they have. This situation continued. In return, we fought in defense of the 1 September revolution on different occasions. When (President) Anwar al-Sadat tried to invade Libya, we fought with the Libyans and took part in military operations.

[Sharbal] Were you there personally?

[Jibril] Certainly. We also fought on their side when America and France used the Chadians to weaken and undermine Libya.

[Sharbal] So you fought against the Chadians?

[Jibril] Yes.

[Sharbal] Where?

[Jibril] In the region of Aouzou. Some 2,000 of our youths fought there.

[Sharbal] Is it true also that certain Lebanese organizations fought in Aouzou?

[Jibril] Yes. For example, the Socialist Progressive Party, and a limited number of communists. But we were the major and active weight. We stayed for two years until the Chadian war was over, that is, between 1985 and 1987.

[Sharbal] Did-you sustain losses?

[Jibril] Of course.

[Sharbal] Did the socialists also sustain losses?

[Jibril] I know only about the losses in our ranks. The Libyans felt we did a splendid job by defending the 1 September revolution on the border of Chad. This is because we did not fight as mercenaries but as people who believed that it was important to defend Libya and the 1 September revolution to counter U.S. and American pressures.

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[Sharbal] Did you retaliate against the U.S. raid on Libya?

[Jibril] No, but as I said, every Arab and Palestinian was enraged to see this barbarity that targeted women and children. [passage omitted]

'Part Three'

JN1904124095 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 17-23 Apr 95 pp 28-34

["Part three" of interview with PFLP-GC Secretary General Ahmad Jibril by Ghassan Sharbal in Damascus; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Sharbal] What about the remains of the Israeli soldiers, a subject which has raised several times recently?

[Jibril] There are remains of the Israelis who were killed in the area between Miradur and Khaldah [in Lebanon]. During the 1982 invasion, the Israelis failed to make an infiltration in al-Na'imah, so they took to the sea. I swear by God Almighty that our groups that were stationed on the coast, which were armed with 106- mm guns and RPG's, were the ones who clashed with the Israelis while the people were hiding in shelters. Two [Israeli] tracked vehicles were destroyed and the soldiers inside were killed. People then came out of the shelters and our fighters became a minority among them. There were some Amal [Shiite faction] fighters who were stationed inside the chalets in that area, who came and took the tracked vehicles. Our fighters were busy with something else. Where did these corps go? You remember that bodies were displayed hanging in public on tracked vehicles during the siege? Who took them and how? There are several stories. But we were the ones who hit them (clashed with them). There were also some bodies in Sultan Ya'qub area. Were these buried in Syrian cemeteries after being mistaken for bodies of Syrian soldiers? Has somebody taken the bodies? Our brothers in Hamas inside the homeland also hold the body of an Israeli soldier, and Hamas leadership asked me what I think they should do with the body of that soldier—whose name is Sa'dun. I advised Hamas leadership not to think about exchanging the body for living persons because this will be a disgrace. How can we exchange bones for living souls?

[Sharbal] How many bodies were there?

[Jibril] Five or six bodies. Hizballah had two prisoners, who were wounded and later died in captivity. Nabih Birri (current Lebanese Chamber of Deputies speaker) had two bodies, and the bodies of two or tree more soldiers were lost. There is also a body inside the occupied territories.

[Sharbal] Do you think that pilot Arad is still alive? How true are the reports that Mustafa al-Dirani [a Lebanese Hizballah Party leader] has handed him over to other parties?

[Jibril] I know that al-Dirani detained him somewhere under guard. One day, the Israelis attacked Maydun area in western al- Biqa' and there were some losses. Some citizens from Maydun were among Arad's guards who, it was said, left him unattended and went to see what happened in their area. When they came back, they could not find the Israeli pilot who had escaped. It is also reported that the brother of one of the Israeli pilot's guards was killed in that Israeli raid, and his brother shot Arad in revenge. There are no confirmed details about Arad and what has happened to him. Not even al-Dirani knows where the Israeli pilot went.

[Sharbal] But Birri says that al-Dirani sold Arad?

[Jibril] No, not even al-Dirani knows. This is the accepted story. [passage omitted]

Authority Suspends Paper Citing Disloyalty

JN1404120095 Amman AL-AHALI in Arabic 13 Apr 95 p 1

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-AHALI has learned that the AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH newspaper, which was issued in Ramallah recently, was suspended by Yasir 'Arafat, head of the self-rule authority, because he believed that the newspaper breached a loyalty agreement reached earlier with the newspaper's owner Nabil 'Amr and its Chief Editor Hafiz al-Barguthi.

Sources told AL-AHALI that the AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH has recently published articles by Dr. Ahmad Sudqi al-Dajani, a prominent opponent of the Oslo accord, and interviewed Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, a Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement senior leader. This annoyed 'Arafat and prompted him to suspend the paper whose directors cited financial reasons for the suspension although the paper has only published for a few weeks.

Security Service Raids East Jerusalem Publication

TA2004185695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] About 20 members of Jibril al-Rujub's Preventive Security Service burst into the printing-press of an opposition weekly in East Jerusalem's Bayt Hanina neighborhood and confiscated the printing blocks.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the weekly in question is AL-UMMAH, owned by 'Adnan al-Khatib, which has vehemently criticized Yasir 'Arafat's policies over the past few weeks. Due to the raid by al-Rujub's men, tomorrow's issue will not be published. The paper's proprietor said he would not lodge a complaint with the Israel Police.

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Algeria

Reportage on Visit by Libya's al-Qadhdhafi

Zeroual Praises Mutual Ties

LD2004231595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At the morning session which brought together State President Liamine Zeroual and Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, the state president made a speech in which he expressed satisfaction with bilateral meetings in recent time and their intensive and continuing nature. The state president said: We are certain that we have been responding to three major demands: To work for providing a framework which permits the embodiment of cohesion and closer ties; opening up new horizons of solidarity and cooperation between the two peoples; and lastly, enhancing the positive influence of bilateral Algerian-Libyan relations in the Maghreb and Arab arenas. [passage omitted]

The state president observed in his speech that coordination between Algeria and Libya has become a good tradition embracing issues vital to the two countries and that the developments in the Arab, UMA [Arab Maghreb Union] arenas, and the region of the Saharan Sahel region were all subjects that have been covered by consultation and the exchange of views between officials of the sectors in the two countries.

The state president also expressed his satisfaction with the development that has been taking place along the border regions and the objectives that had been earmarked in the field of manpower and social affairs. He affirmed his adherence and great desire to develop relations with the fraternal Jamahiriyah in all fields. This conviction is seen in the strength of the ties that link the two peoples and the strategic character of the relations between the two countries.

Telecommunications Ties 'Exemplary'

LD2004094995 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 0630 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Algerian-Libyan bilateral communication affects posts and telecommunications. This area is now a very efficient sector of exemplary cooperation between the two countries. Tahar Allan, the minister of posts and telecommunications, spoke to Nachira Charid, our special correspondent in I-N-Amenas:

[Begin Allan recording] Immediate actions include bringing into service a fiber-optic link between the two countries in two weeks at the latest. The work is under way, and it will be in service in a few weeks, or even a few days between Dabdab and Ghadams. It will be a high capacity fiber-optic link brought into service, enabling Algeria to send Libya's telephone and telegraph traffic and to transfer its computer data abroad. [end recording]

Joint Communique Issued

LD2004215495 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Algerian-Libyan summit which took place at I-N-Amenas concluded with the release of a joint communique and the signing of the minutes of an agreement.

According to the joint communique, the talks reviewed the developing bilateral relations and evaluated in depth the Maghreb, Arab, regional, and international conditions.

The two sides agreed to prepare a visualization of the genuine economic integration in the fields of industry, agriculture, trade exchange, and joint investment.

The two sides also expressed their firm resolve to strengthen the march of the Maghreb Union as a strategic option of the Maghreb countries and the need to activate its institutions and to give them the necessary powers to embody Maghreb unity so that this will be reflected in the life of the Maghreb citizen, his movement, and his economic activity.

Concerning the crisis between the Jamahiriyah and certain Western powers Algerian Head of State Liamine Zeroual renewed Algeria's solidarity with the Libyan Arab people in their steadfastness vis-a-vis the harsh measures against them.

The two sides reaffirmed the implementation of the resolutions of the Arab League, the OAU, the OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] and the Nonaligned Movement. The two sides also called on the Security Council to undertake a new neutral inquiry in order to arrive at the truth and to lift the measures it had imposed on the Jamahiriyah.

Concerning terrorism and violence in the area, the two sides renewed their condemnation of all aspects of extremism, terrorism, and violence and the exploitation of the Islamic religion for political purposes as part of the plot to conspire against the Arab homeland and the Islamic world.

Lengthy discussions took place on the current Arab situation and the perils which threaten pan-Arab security. The two delegations reaffirmed the need to undertake an earnest and responsible Arab reconciliation to enable the implementation of Arab documents and agreements in the field of economic unity and a joint Arab defense.

The two sides expressed their firm stand on supporting the issue of the Palestinian people.

Concerning the situation in the area of the Saharan Sahel countries, the two sides affirmed the importance of coordination and consultation to ensure security, stability, and cooperation.

On the situation in the Mediterranean basin, the two delegations affirmed their firm stand that the sea

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remains a lake of peace and cooperation. In this context, the two countries renewed their confirmation of the continuation of the dialogue between the Maghreb Union and the EU states.

Concerning Middle East security and stability, the two sides affirmed that the region should rid itself of all the nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons of mass destruction and that equal and balanced security be realized among all the states of the region.

Al-Qadhdhafi Ends Visit, Departs

LD2104085895 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0825 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tripoli, 21 Apr—Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, the brother leader of the revolution has concluded a fraternal visit to the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria within the framework of continued consultations between the two countries, during which he held talks with Algerian President Liamine Zeroual.

The brother leader of the revolution was given a big send off; President Zeroual led those who saw him off. [passage omitted]

Dembri Supports Libya Over Hajj Issue

LD2004193295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] We point out that on the sidelines of the [OAU] meeting's proceedings, Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri gave the following statement to colleague Moukhtar Maher in which he stressed Algeria's special interest in the issue of the Libyan pilgrims to the Ka'bah.

[Begin Dembri recording] They have given special interest in the issue of the Libyan pilgrims. Naturally, it seems that it is necessary for the whole of the Arab and Islamic world, and the Islamic nation, to express their absolute solidarity with the brothers in Libya, because this affects the respect for our peoples' holy sites. It is necessary to send, whatever fell within the responsibility of the international committee, everything which concerns the annual pilgrimage to the Ka'bah.

This is what we want to express publicly. Of course, the foreign affairs apparatus in both countries will use within the framework of its moves all the necessary means to highlight our position in dealing with this issue. [end recording]

Security Forces Eliminate Five 'Terrorists'

LD2004131695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A security services's statement issued today said that its forces eliminated an armed terrorist group in Relizane, after a manhunt carried out by the security forces in the town center enabled them to pinpoint the hideout of the group, which was composed of five terrorists.

The intervention of the security forces enabled them to eliminate the five terrorists and recover a quantity of weapons.

Ait Ahmed Claims War Between Mafias Continuing

BR2104135195 Milan CORRIERE DELLA SERA in Italian 21 Apr 95 p 10

[Interview with Hocine Ait Ahmed, leader of the Socialist Forces Front, by Guido Santevecchi; place and date not given: "Mafia War in Algeria"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Santevecchi] In Rome you signed a deal with the Islamists of the FIS [National Salvation Front]. If you win one day, are you not afraid of consigning Algeria to the dictatorship of Allah?

[Ait Ahmed] We already have a dictatorship. Thirty-three years ago the military imposed a Stalinist-style regime which refuses to dialogue. This is why the opposition parties met at Sant'Egidio [Rome rally venue]. And for the first time since 1962 those in power lost the initiative. They replied with a refusal, because they want to dictate the rules of the game. President Zeroual played the card of presidential elections and tried to get us involved. But the Algerian people is tired of this spiral of abuses of power and of blood. It has seen a hope in the Rome proposals and is cultivating them with enthusiasm.

[Santevecchi] But can one believe the Islamists?

[Ait Ahmed] We are not allies and the objective is not to turn the FIS into a democratic party. It will continue to aim for the constitution of an Islamic state. But we want it to renounce violence. The hawks in the army, the so-called "eradicators," have an interest in continuing the conflict. For this reason they are distancing the FIS political leaders from the militants, to make of them lost spirits of fundamentalism, dedicated solely to death.

[Santevecchi] Why this strategy? Can the regime win militarily?

[Ait Ahmed] No, absolutely not. During the liberation war half a million French soldiers were unable to get the better of 9 million Algerians. Today we are 27 million and the security forces are unable to line up more than 60,000 men. But the fact is that this war economy is enriching the fundamentalists in both camps. At this stage even bananas are being imported, and someone in the regime is getting enormously rich in the process. It is a war between mafias. The Islamic guerrillas are doing business by extorting money from the tradesmen. The militia are being recruited from among the mob and are taking home 12,000 dinars a month, three times the

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salary of a worker. In this way Algeria will end up like Somalia, in the hands of the warlords.

[Santevecchi] There is a call for dialogue signed by eight generals.

[Ait Ahmed] The generals are only the technicians of the war. They do not know how to dialogue. I would almost say that unfortunately Algeria does not have a Jaruzelski [former Polish president], I would even say that even a Pinochet [former Chilean president] could be useful at this stage. He would at least be a reference point.

[Santevecchi] If the country voted again as you are calling for in the Rome platform, would the FIS win again?

[Ait Ahmed] No. And I am not saying this out of ideological conviction. What I am saying is that the Algerian people are sick of violence. In the first round of the December 1991 elections seven million Algerians did not vote and the Islamists moved ahead. But immediately afterwards the people realized. And in January 1992 we brought out into the streets this majority which had not voted and wanted neither the regime nor an Islamic state: a procession 10 kilometers long. [Ait Ahmed ends]

It is in these 10 kilometers that Ait Ahmed is placing his hope today.

Egypt

Mubarak Sends Cable of Condolences to Clinton

NC2004213495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2043 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 20 Apr (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak sent a cable today to U.S. President Bill Clinton in which he expressed his condolences over the victims of the terrorist act in Oklahoma yesterday.

President Mubarak also expressed his regrets to the injured and their families among the American people.

President Husni Mubarak pointed out in his cable to President Bill Clinton the importance of international cooperation and coordination to confront bloody terrorism, which the international community is being subjected to. This cooperation should be characterized by the necessary firmness to preserve international peace and the security of society, as well as the safety of its sons.

Musa Expresses Condolences for Oklahoma Victims

NC2004193995 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today expressed the condolences of the Egyptian leadership, government, and people to the families of the victims in the explosion that took place yesterday in Oklahoma City. The explosion left 36 dead and more than 400 others wounded. Musa stressed the Egyptian people's solidarity with the friendly U.S. people in facing this ugly incident.

Musa Gives Speech at NPT Conference in New York

NC2004212295 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1518 GMT 20 Apr 95

["Text" of speech by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa at the international conference on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in New York on 20 April—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Chairman: At the outset, allow me to convey on behalf of the Egyptian delegation the sincerest feelings of condolences to the families of the victims of the Oklahoma explosion, to the friendly American people, and to the U.S. Administration and to express our soldarity with them in facing this ugly and criminal incident.

Mr. Chairman:

It pleases me to congratulate you personally and your friendly country on presiding over the conference of the parties to the NPT. I have personally followed your numerous contributions in the field of disarmament. I am confident that your wise chairmanship will help toward the achievement of the missions entrusted to this historic conference. I must also express great appreciation to the chairmen of the four sessions of the preparatory committee for this conference for the effort and experience they have contributed in created a good basis for our work in the weeks to come.

Mr. Chairman:

I believe we all agree that the discovery of the atom is one of the most important events of the 20th Century. The peaceful use of the atom is a positive development in the march of mankind. Its military use, the threat to use it, or its use as deterrent through its mere presence is, in our opinion, a source of real danger to peace and threatens mankind's right to life and people's rights to development. It is also an act that threatens world and regional peace and security, and that is contrary to human rights.

Hence, we are anxious on the universality of the treaty in the real sense of the word, that is, without exception; on its credibility in the real sense of the word, that is, through serious and effective guarantees; and on its equilibrium in the sense that all parties should respect their obligations and that the nonproliferation system should not be used to impose restrictions on some parties in favor of other parties and to exclude some third parties, perhaps forever. This is an incomprehensible and unacceptable matter.

Mr. Chairman:

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Some 50 years have passed since the first UN resolution expressing fear over nuclear proliferation was passed. In accordance with this resolution, the IAEA was formed; it goal is to eliminate nuclear weapons and to remove them from the national arsenals of states. Some 25 years have passed since the NPT was put into effect. The NPT primarily aims to ensure the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and only for peaceful purposes.

Perhaps at the beginning of our evaluation of the application of the treaty, we should remember the general guidelines and concepts that prevailed when it came into effect on 5 March 1970. These guidelines and concepts were reflected then by the remarks of Aleksey Kosygin, chairman of the USSR Supreme Presidium, who noted that "the treaty imposes a legal rule on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons and that this rule cannot be ignored even by the states that are not parties to the treaty," and by U.S. President Nixon, who considered it "a step among the basic steps for preventing confrontation and achieving full peace."

It is also proper to remember the remarks of the then UN Secretary General U Thant, who spoke on behalf of the whole world when he said that it is in the interest of the international community that the NPT be universal.

The international community is expecting this respectable conference to evaluate the treaty in the coming weeks in a way commensurate with these concepts and aspirations and in accordance with the spirit and letter of the treaty and to take into account the international and regional developments that we have witnessed over the past 25 years and that we are still living now.

I would like to present the Egyptian viewpoint on the objectives of this Treaty as we specified it 25 years ago, and as we should specify it now, in the following points:

First, the Treaty was born under a different order and in political conditions teeming with tension. At the time, agreement was reached that we should adhere to the United Nations Charter, which made keeping international peace and security two of its most important responsibilities and disarmament and arms limitation its most important measures. This way we would be led to general and comprehensive disarmament and toward taking the necessary steps to realize the objective that locically must include nuclear disarmament and agreement over arrangements for removing these lethal weapons and eliminating their dangers.

Second, the NPT has been considered a step toward halting the worsening problem of the spread of nuclear weapons. Many countries started joining it on the grounds that it will be followed up by other international and regional steps, some of which will contain the international dangers and the vertical and horizontal spread of weapons. Other steps deal with dangers of a regional nature. So the Treaty was not merely an objective in and of itself or an achievement with a permanent nature, a point at which we could stop in the absence of other international and regional measures that truly secure us against nuclear weapons, particularly with regard to the countries that want to abandon the nuclear military option.

Third, the nuclear and nonnuclear countries alike agreed that benefiting from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is a natural and legitimate right for everyone and that the measures for guarantees that must be adhered to have the objective of expanding the peaceful use of nuclear energy without the military exploitation of this technology. This is where the importance of the IAEA's role lies.

Proceeding from this, the parties to the NPT agreed on a system that will eventually lead to global nuclear disarmament, a system that allows all its parties to make peaceful use of this new technology. I assert that we agreed over a system according to which we will all be equal at the end of the road, a system that will apply to every party without exception or distinction.

Mr. Chairman, we came to this conference hoping that a spirit of dialogue, not challenge, would prevail over its meetings and that a spirit of understanding would overcome the spirit of confrontation. Our most important commitment is to strengthen the Treaty, establish its globality, and increase its effectiveness. We need to evaluate our achievements in an objective way that strengthens the positive aspects and makes the necessary decisions to deal with the negative sides of the experiment.

Proceeding from this point and on the basis of harmony of opinion regarding the basic objectives of this Treaty, one of which is to reject the idea of owning nuclear weapons, and instead eliminate them, I believe that the absolute majority of the parties to the Treaty agree with our opinion. Our opinion is that despite the achievements of the past few years of the Treaty, achievements represented in the search for agreements to end strategic and medium-range nuclear weapons—achievements that we appreciate, we cannot ignore the reality. In over 25 years of the Treaty, the nuclear weapons stockpile is much larger than it was when it came into effect, an issue that radically contradicts the basic objectives of the Treaty.

Such a long time has passed but we have not reached agreement on a total ban on nuclear experiments or on preventing the production and storage of fissionable material for military purposes. Our efforts in this regard are still coming up against difficulties and obstacles that cannot be ignored.

The biggest criticism of the NPT is the continuing excessive divergence in the commitments of the NPT member states. There are countries that possess nuclear weapons without any control or restriction. At the same time, there are countries that have decided not to possess nuclear weapons or nuclear detonators and to submit their nuclear facilities to the IAEA's full control system.

This situation has continued to date, although this divergence should have been transitional and moving

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toward achieving equality between rights and duties. The continuing divergence between commitments and duties is incompatible with any concept acceptable to the collective security and in an atmosphere free of nuclear dangers. Furthermore, this divergence runs counter to the spirit and objectives of the NPT. Therefore, the nuclear countries will always be urged to draw up a specific framework to reduce and eliminate nuclear arsenals. They should also set target dates for the implementation of this goal.

Meanwhile, leaving the nonnuclear countries without effective and legal security guarantees to defend them against the dangers of these weapons is very disappointing and frustrating to the nonproliferation objectives. This will not lead to international assurance or strengthen international peace.

Egypt has closely followed the unilateral declarations made by the nuclear countries. I find myself dutybound to say frankly that the declarations made by the nuclear countries, except for China, contain several reservations and conditions. I regret to say that Resolution No. 984, which was issued recently 27 years after the issuance of Resolution 255, is still short of providing the required security guarantees to protect non-nuclear countries against the dangers of these weapons. The resolution focused on help when a nuclear attack occurs. The resolution ignored other basic factors that should have been taken into consideration by the council. These factors include:

1. Deterrence: The council should adopt the necessary measures to confront any nuclear threat in accordance with Chapter VII of the organization.

2. Protection: The council should emphasize its collective responsibility by adopting joint measures to curb the aggression.

3. Effectiveness: Not to use the veto to prevent the obstruction of the council from shouldering its responsibilities.

Mr. Chairman, while we are committed to support the treaty and increase its effectiveness in the various spheres that we already mentioned, we should refer to the excessive shortcoming involving the international cooperation in the field of peaceful usage of nuclear technology and the transfer of this technology to the nonnuclear countries, which are members of the treaty. There are member states that submit their nuclear facilities and installations to the control system and yet their exports are still subjected to restrictions by the safeguard groups, while nonmember states have managed to obtain this technology without any problems. This discrimination and double standard negatively affects the international nonproliferation system.

Therefore, Egypt demands that the work of the safeguard groups be revised with regard to the transfer of nuclear technology so that it would become an international order. This order should include all the member states and should call for applying the IAEA's safeguard system to all nuclear activities of any state prior to allowing the transfer of technology or nuclear material to it. This should be applied equally to both the members and nonmembers of the treaty.

Mr. Chairman, any country's assessment of international treaties and charters and the extent to which they achieve that country's national security depends on how far these treaties and charters go toward meeting the requirements of both international and regional security. These treaties must provide a political and legal ground that applies to everybody and assures them of their security within a framework of equality of rights and duties, so that the feeling of trust in international security arrangements may not turn into a feeling of concern over regional parties' noncompliance with these arrangements. Thus, ensuring the universality of the Treaty becomes a fundamental condition for attaining its goals. I repeat here what has already been said: The continuation of the Treaty affirms the legal rule calling for the need for the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, a rule that should not be ignored, not even by the countries that are not members of the Treaty. Otherwise, while seeking to consecrate a nonproliferation system we would be granting countries that are outside this system an unfair and illogically favorable treatment, and naturally this will not be acceptable.

Mr. Chairman, Egypt's stance regarding nuclear nonproliferation issues is an expression of a firm and established policy the roots of which go back decades. This policy reflects principles that have been translated into specific stances on the international and regional levels. Perhaps it is appropriate to recall Egypt's efforts since it signed the NPT in 1968 toward preventing and eliminating the nuclear danger in Africa and the Middle East. They are as follows:

1. Proceeding from the call made by the first African summit held in Cairo in 1964, Egypt is participating with the African states in constant efforts to make Africa a continent free of nuclear weapons. I am pleased here to note that these efforts are nearing a successful completion.

2. Through the UN General Assembly, Egypt and Iran called in 1974 for setting up a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, a call that was adopted by Egypt alone and remains so. Egypt has also proposed that the IAEA draft a model of safeguards and verification of the legal obligations arising from the establishment of such a zone as a practical contribution toward helping the parties concerned draft their own concept.

Based on the same premise, in April 1990 President Husni Mubarak proposed an initiative for establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, be they nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons.

I would like here to refer to the multilateral talks on arms control and security in the Middle East. These talks

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emanated from the Madrid peace conference and were requested by Egypt, since this topic is one of the vital issues that needs to be agreed upon regionally to establish real peace and stability in our region.

Mr. Chairman: The Egyptian initiatives and efforts in the field of world and regional disarmament have been numerous. Regrettably, however, our feeling of frustration, disappointment, and the lack of security has at the same time been increasing. In addition to the slow pace of nuclear disarmament, the weakness of the guarantees, and the disproportion of the obligations, we find that regional nuclear armament in the Middle East is compromising our stability and threatening the security of the whole region.

The existence of a nuclear program not subjected to the safeguard system on our eastern borders creates a very dangerous situation for us. Therefore, we have held intensive contacts with all our regional partners and with the influential international parties with a view to arriving at international or regional arrangements that will protect the region from the dangers of nuclear weapons and confirm the determination of all parties, including Israel, to adhere to international charters, and above all to join the NPT and to subject all nuclear installations to the IAEA's safeguards system.

In these contacts we have expressed our readiness to go along with preliminary and specific steps taken by Israel if such steps constitute practical progress toward its joining the NPT or toward the removal of weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East. We have proposed:

1. The start of an official negotiating process in the Middle East arms control committee of the multilateral track on the rules and elements for the establishment of a zone clear of weapons of mass destruction.

2. All the states of the region, including Israel, committing themselves to joining international charters on the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction—including nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons—within a time frame suitable for peace agreements to be reached between Israel and the parties to the Middle East peace process, which began in Madrid.

3. Discussion of inspections and the exchange of inspection visits to the nuclear installations.

Mr. Chairman, we have presented these proposals with a positive spirit and the hope of reaching an understanding in which Israel affirms its commitment to take practical steps to negotiate on clearing the region of all weapons of mass destruction and its intention to reconcile its security situation and legal obligations in the area of disarmament with the obligations of the other regional parties within the framework of the NPT.

We have submitted these ideas with the hope of opening a path that supports the credibility and stability of the NPT. The continuation of doubts on the Israeli nuclear program will lead to the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region and will usher in a regional arms race with all the dangers this entails. In addition, it will show that the NPT has been unable to achieve its desired objectives. This will send a negative message to the NPT's members in the region that joining the treaty has not assured them security and stability against nuclear dangers. This will also raise a serious question: Is it logical, a good policy, and responsible for the states of the region to approve an indefinite extension of the treaty when a state that lives in their midst enjoys an exception that enables it to retain a nuclear program outside the framework of legitimacy and that can threaten their stability and security?

Despite this, we held the contacts that we spoke about earlier out of our faith in the importance of banning the spread of nuclear weapons, our desire to continue the application of the treaty in a stable manner, from the perspective of our commitment to comprehensive peace in the Middle East, and our belief that since there is no security without peace then there cannot be peace without security, and this applies to evryone.

We presented our proposals in a positive spirit reflecting the presence of peaceful relations between ourselves and Israel. These are relations that obligate both parties to discuss and confer on various subjects of mutual interest, particularly those that result in a certain step or cause concern for the region. Stability in the region cannot exist if there is a security defect or military supremacy. This will not be in the interests of any party and cannot serve either regional peace or international peace and security.

Despite all our efforts, Israel has not responded to our requests to join the NPT. It also has not responded to our proposal to start negotiations on regional measures regarding weapons of mass destruction. It has not reacted to our suggestion of mutually inspecting nuclear installations. Israel has rejected all of these things despite the fact that UN records reveal that Israel has gone along with the consensus of the UN General Assembly resolution that calls for establishing a region free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. The resolution also calls on the parties in the region to join the NPT. Israel rejected all of this despite the fact that from the seventies until 1990 it said that its only condition for doing so was to start direct negotiations with the concerned Arab sides. This is what has already been achieved.

Mr. Chairman, this Israeli stance will also increase our persistence regarding our stance to protect the Middle East from many dangers caused by this incomprehensible and biased position Israel is adopting.

I have presented these points to you very clearly and frankly not because I am looking for a confrontation with Israel. Egypt was the first Arab country that signed a peace agreement with Israel more than 17 years ago. These peaceful relations will continue as peaceful relations. However, we are committed and will continue to be committed to the fact that the road to peace is the

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only safe option to achieve a better future for our region, but under security that we can all enjoy.

From the same perspective, and out of the same spirit of responsibility that prompted us to enter into peaceful relations with Israel and pioneer the Arab-Israeli peace process, Egypt today proposes the issue of nuclear disarmament in the Middle East. We propose it because of the presence of direct negotiations between the countries of the region for the first time to establish the basis for peaceful, secure, and prosperous relations in the Middle East. How can this basis be finalized and strengthened without agreement over the principle of equality, commitments, and rights on the regional level and without starting talks on the agreed upon arrangements for this? These should be finalized with the finalization of the peace structure, particularly on a subject of the magnitude of nuclear military presence, which is linked to many ideas and reactions that have to be straightened out for peace and stability to prevail in the Middle East. This is an issue on which we cannot accept double standards to be applied nor preferential treatment to be given to one side at the expense of another side or sides.

From this podium, in the name of peace, with a positive spirit, and within the framework of this historic incident, Egypt is asking Israel to review its stance and adhere, as its neighbors in the region do, to the articles of the NPT.

I also take this opportunity to call on the members of the NPT to work persistently and continuously to guarantee the commitment of all countries in the region to policies that adhere to the objectives and intentions of the NPT. These should go along with confirmations made by the Security Council summit on 31 January 1992: That the spread of weapons of mass destruction is a threat to international peace and security. This leads us to expect the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities so that it confronts the dangers of these weapons and takes specific and tangible measures in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, as I explained, Egypt was one of the first countries to support the NPT. Egypt continues to be one of its supporters, despite the shortcomings we see and apprehensions we have regarding its implementation in a manner that goes along with the spirit of the treaty and its texts, since it provides the general political grounds without which the whole world will lack a framework for preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and achieving nuclear disarmament.

I would like to seize this opportunity to reiterate what President Husni Mubarak has emphasized in several public statements in the past few months, namely, "that Egypt supports the goals and intentions of the Treaty and is committed to its articles and to working within its framework to remedy the shortcomings and strengthen the nonproliferation system." But this does not find Egypt forgetting that in its present form and in the absence of the membership of a neighbor with known nuclear capabilities, the Treaty cannot provide credible protection for national and regional security. Accordingly, Egypt is not in a position to support an indefinite extension of the NPT, because our regional conditions in this connection are unstable, even unencouraging overall. Perhaps it may be appropriate to conclude with the following:

1. Egypt signed the Treaty in 1968 then ratified it in 1981 on the premise that this would encourage Israel to take reciprocal steps. So far we have seen no serious move in that direction despite the assurances of several friendly states in this regard.

2. Israel has refused to respond to the flexible and preliminary proposals we recently put forward to demonstrate our positive inclination in this regard.

3. Consecrating a fait accompli by applying the Treaty permanently to the Middle East countries, Israel excepted, constitutes a serious flaw that threatens the region's security and stability, something the Arab League member states, which held a ministerial meeting in Cairo a few weeks ago to mark the Arab League's 50th anniversary, unanimously agreed was unacceptable.

4. The Middle East is going through a historic and highly sensitive and important era, in which the foundations for peaceful relations in the region are being laid down. This could not be attained if we were to apply double standards or permit a favorable situation for one party over the other.

Mr. Chairman, if the direct regional considerations in our region are the factors that govern us in not being able to adopt a political stance in support of an indefinite extension of the treaty, Egypt intends to participate actively in the proceedings of this conference, the primary goal of which must be to study and analyze the success of the Treaty in serving the legitimate interests of the member states. In light of this study, it could be possible to adopt the appropriate alternative, among the various other alternatives proposed for extending the validity of the Treaty, or to consider suspending the conference for a reasonable period, as the Syrian foreign minister noted yesterday.

But the current concentration on alternatives for extending the Treaty without a careful study of the extent to which its goals have been achieved, and before laying down an integrated concept for remedying the shortcomings in its application, will make things lopsided and will take the extension decision away from its sound course. Such a decision must necessarily be linked, as the Mexican foreign minister mentioned, with specific steps toward attaining nonproliferation goals and the universality of the Treaty, thus strengthening its effectiveness. This is particularly true with regard to establishing a balance among the responsibilities of all its members and reaching two agreements on banning nuclear tests and preventing the production and stockpiling of fissionable material for military purposes, providing real and legal assurances binding to the nonnuclear states, enabling all countries to benefit from the

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peaceful use of nuclear energy, and ensuring the universality of the Treaty. All these issues will be discussed by the Nonaligned Movement in its meeting next week in Bandung to determine its opinion and stance.

We are certain that many of the countries participating in the conference have constructive proposals and initiatives to consolidate and strengthen the NPT. On this occasion I would like to affirm to you that Egypt's delegation will spare no effort or opinion to assist you in reaching a result that enjoys the consensus of views and takes into consideration the misgivings and concerns that many have expressed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Daily Applauds Stand

NC2104103195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Apr (MENA)—AL-JUMHURIYAH newspaper has emphasized the world's interest in Egypt's principled stand on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has expressed this stand by saying that Egypt will not withdraw from the treaty, but is seeking to improve its effectiveness and incorporate Israel into it, as well as seeking the nuclear states' commitment to sufficient guarantees for nonnuclear states.

In its editorial today, it notes that 'Amr Musa has affirmed that Egypt supports the treaty's renewal for a temporary term to be subjected to regular review for as long as Israel's nuclear program remains in place.

The paper says this responsible stand, through which Egypt expresses the aspirations of the international community, has managed to attract numerous supporters because it is built on credibility and logic. This stand, it adds, seeks to enhance the treaty's effectiveness and the positive measures entailed by the renewal and eventually guarantees security and stability for the states that are not members of the nuclear club.

The paper says the Egyptian stance has changed these countries' previous positions. It refers to the coordination between nonaligned and Arab countries on voting for a temporary extension and to the nuclear states' guarantees to defend the nonnuclear countries, noting that the Arab countries considered these guarantees insufficient.

Daily on Christopher's 'Ambiguity' in NPT Speech

NC2104101695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0603 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 21 Apr (MENA)—AL-AHRAM newspaper describes UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali's speech opening the New York conference to review and renew the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] as objective and balanced and says it expressed many fears haunting the world's conscience.

In its editorial today, it adds that the most prominent point in Dr. Butrus-Ghali's speech was its focus on the need to devise fair criteria for the world's handling of this issue and his clear address to the international community on the need to provide security guarantees for nonnuclear states.

The paper notes that despite all the positive points contained in the UN secretary general's speech, he did not refer to the countries that are so far refusing to sign the NPT. At the same time, the paper adds, he addressed strong criticism to the countries that have previously signed the NPT but are failing to sign it now, reneging on their commitment, and seeking to manufacture and possess nuclear weapons.

The paper emphasizes that Dr. Butrus-Ghali's call to capitalize on the opportunity of the ongoing peace process in the Middle East to render the region free of all weapons of mass destruction lacked the assertion of the need for all the region's countries to join the treaty and lacked criticism of the countries that refuse to join the treaty.

On the other hand, the paper expresses astonishment and asks about the ambiguity which was distinct in U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's speech. Christopher, it says, evaded the announcement of a definitive stand by his country on any of the thorny issues raised at the conference and contented himself with rhetoric about nuclear disarmament as humanity's collective goal.

Reportage on Libyan Pilgrims, Proposed Flights

Mubarak Discusses Pilgrims

NC2004135295 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Husni Mubarak held a high-level meeting today with National Democratic Party [NDP] Political Bureau and General Secretariat members. [passage omitted]

Speaking afterward, Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said President Mubarak reviewed the names of 90 NDP nominees to run for the mid-term elections for the Consultative Council in 24 governorates.

During the meeting, President Mubarak also discussed Egypt's recent efforts to fulfill the Libyan brothers' desire to perform the pilgrimage duty by air. President Mubarak reviewed his high-level contacts with the countries concerned and gave instructions this morning to Egyptian planes to leave for the Libyan Jamahiriyah to carry the Libyan pilgrims according to the schedule and the agreement worked out between Egypt Air and the Libyan Jamahiriyah.

President Mubarak noted that Egypt exerted these efforts out of its desire to avoid anything that could affect the ongoing efforts to contain the Libyan-Western crisis as well as in deference to the ties linking Egypt and the Libyan Jamahiriyah, a fraternal Arab neighbor.

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Planes Begin Trips to Libya

NC2004122395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 20 Apr (MENA)—The first Egypt Air plane took off from Cairo airport for Tripoli at 1230 today to ferry Libyan pilgrims from there to Saudi Arabia to perform the hajj.

The plane is a 270-passenger Airbus 300.

The second plane is scheduled to leave for Benghazi at 1300 today to transport pilgrims from there.

The Security Council's Sanctions Committee agreed yesterday to allow Egyptian planes to ferry 6,000 Libyan pilgrims to perform the hajj.

Mubarak, al-Qadhdhafi Pilgrims

NC2104082595 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received a telephone call from Libyan revolution leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi last night. The discussion dealt with the transportation of Libyan pilgrims to Saudi Arabia aboard an Egyptian aircraft to perform pilgrimage rituals following the resolution passed by the Security Council's competent committee. Col. al-Qadhdhafi expressed Libya's appreciation of President Mubarak's efforts in this regard.

The first Egyptian plane carrying Libyan pilgrims landed at Jeddah Airport last night with 252 Libyan pilgrims aboard. It is the first of Egypt Air's 45 flights to ferry 6,000 Libyan pilgrims to Saudi Arabia.

A responsible source in Egypt Air said the corporation has devised a plan to transport Libyan pilgrims from Banghazi and Tripoli airports directly to Jeddah to perform pilgrimage. He added that the company sent six teams of pilots and stewards to the Egypt Air station in Jeddah to work on flights between Jeddah, Tripoli, and Banghazi.

Ambassador to PA Confers With Hamas Delegation

NC2004162795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1550 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, 20 Apr (MENA)—Ambassador Mahmud Fahmi, the head of Egypt's representation to the Palestinian Authority [PA], met in his office today with a Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] delegation led by Hamas official spokesman Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar.

The Egyptian ambassador expressed the hope that the PA and Hamas would overcome the existing crisis and serve the interests of the Palestinian people. The ambassador listened to the Hamas viewpoint regarding recent developments in Gaza. The conferees expressed their desire to reach an understanding and avoid sedition and infighting.

Sidqi Addresses People's Assembly on Budget

NC2004120195 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking after the People's Assembly discussion of two bills on the development plan and the 1995-1996 budget last night, Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi announced that budget appropriations for some sectors have been increased by a total of 180 million pounds. The education budget will be increased by 80 million pounds, the Awqaf Ministry by 20 million pounds, and the Health Ministry by 30 million pounds. Most of the additional amount in the health budget will be allocated for local treatment of kidney failure. The Higher Council for Youths and Sports will get 20 million pounds more, al-Azhar institutes 15 million pounds, and the universities 20 million pounds.

In his statement Dr. Sidqi said this year's plan and budget call for optimism. He added: We are taking good steps forward. We expect to achieve a balanced economy that will upgrade the standard of living and double the national income, in line with the guidance of President Husni Mubarak. He went on: Hopes are great and the indications are clear that the private sector will bear the major responsibility in production and investment and gradually replace public investment, except for strategic investment.

Discussing the writing off of the last portion of debts, the prime minister said: Some 15 percent of the debts were written off first, and this was followed by canceling another 15 percent. Of the 50 percent of debts that would be written off as agreed with the IMF and the World Bank, only 20 percent remain.

Sidqi stressed that government policy concerning investment is based on fair distribution of this investment to all governorates without discrimination; attention is given to the Upper Egypt governorates. Discussing the budget deficit, he explained that the general local debt is not serious because it does not constitute a burden on the national economy as long as it is used to serve the economy and build the infrastructure. The danger, he explained, lies in the misuse of foreign debt. He said the budget deficit is dwindling every year and is expected to drop this year, 1994-1995, to 1.5 percent of the gross local product. He added: We contained inflation, which dropped from 27 percent in 1988 to 8 percent this year, a very acceptable figure that was achieved thanks to the financial and monetary policies.

Dr. Sidqi stressed in his statement that the Egyptian reform program is 100 percent Egyptian and that no force can pressure Egypt or get it to do something it does not wish to do. He added: We are consulting with the IMF and the World Bank because we are a founder

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country, and it is our right to ask their opinion and benefit from their experience.

The prime minister reviewed some achievements, saying they show an increase in the services provided by the state. Wages increased from 1.742 billion pounds in 1981 to about 20.2 billion in the new budget. Investment in education rose from 688 million pounds in 1981 to about 10.488 billion pounds this year, and in health from 229 million pounds in 1981 to 3.6 billion in the new budget. Subsidies also rose from 1.57 billion pounds in 1981 to about 4.665 billion pounds this year; this is a direct subsidy except for the sectors of health, education, and culture. Investment in al-Azhar stood at 50 million pounds in 1981; it has risen to 978 million pounds today. Investment in the Awqaf Ministry rose from 36 million pounds in 1981 to 377 million pounds today, in drinking water and sewage systems from 275 million pounds in 1981 to 4 billion pounds in the new budget, and in insurance from 411 million in 1981 to 6.378 billion pounds this year.

In its evening session chaired by Speaker Ahmad Fathi Surur, the People's Assembly approved a draft law adopting the economic and social plan for 1995-1996, which aims at raising the growth rate to 5.4 percent.

Sudan

National Islamic Front's 'Secret' Trade Explored

95AF0070A Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 10 Mar 95 pp 24-25

[FBIS Translated Text] When the forces of the Afghan Taleban movement [Islamic fundamentalist militia] stormed a military position of the forces of the Hezb-e-Islami party led by Golboddin Hekmatyar in Qandahar, they were surprised to find four stores of imported Sudanese sesame seeds. Taleban Movement sources estimated the stored quantity at 4,000 tons. A prisoner admitted that Hasan al-Turabi, leader of the Sudanese National Islamic Front [NIF], and Daf'allah al-Tum, one of the wealthiest people in the al-Turabi's Front, export sesame to Afghanistan and import Russian weapons, which the forces of the Hezb-e-Islami [Islamic Party] seized during the liberation war.

This incident highlighted the commercial activity of al-Turabi's NIF, which is headed by a 40-member leadership council, 35 of whom engage in commerce. They make astronomical profits that place them on the list of millionaires in one of the poorest countries of the world. The incident also uncovered the secret of the relationship between al-Turabi's Front and the Afghan Hezb-e-Islami party. This old relationship has been strengthened in recent years as a result of economic ties. Sudanese opposition sources have said that the NIF's merchants export wheat, cotton, and sesame to the Hezb-e-Islami in return for weapons. A ship flying the Cypriot flag arrived at the Sudanese port of Malakal last September carrying a large shipment of mortars, RPG launchers, and automatic rifles imported from Kabul for the pro-NIF Popular Defense Force (PDF). On the same day, a Sudanese ship left Malakal port for Afghanistan carrying a shipment of grains and cotton for the Hezb-e-Islami. Sudanese opposition circles estimated the value of the deal at $24 million.

Sudanese opposition sources have said that the Afghan weapons have temporarily been stored in the Coptic Club in Khartoum. Colonel Salah Karrar and his partner Ibrahim Jadawibah bought this club to make it into a commercial center mainly for buying and selling foreign currency in the black market. However, stagnation in the money market prompted them to sell it to a merchant of al-Turabi's Front.

Hasan Ahmad al-Hasan, a leading member of the opposition al-Ummah Party, said: "The NIF has established several commercial companies in Switzerland, which deal in the local market in Sudan. These companies found some difficulties in transferring their profits to Geneva. The NIF's 40-member council pressured the finance and trade minister and the Sudanese Central Bank to exempt these companies."

Al-Hasan added: "One of the companies is Lirax [as transliterated]. Its board chairman is Yasin Umar al-Imam. The Sudanese trade minister issued a decision, giving this company a monopoly of the Sudanese free markets. The pro-NIF company established another company called Nortex [as transliterated]. The Sudanese Development Company for Investment, which has its headquarters in Bahrain, is owned by NIF merchants, including Dr. Ali al-Hajj. This company bought the Kanaf Abu-Na'amah project for 830 million Sudanese pounds, or $10 million. This company also has started negotiating to buy a large piece of land in the center of Khartoum, known as the Zanki al-Khudar land, for $375 million. It has also bought al-Sudan Hotel for $1.5 million. The company also entered as a shareholder in the purchase of the Sudanese Airline Company, whose paid capital is $60 million."

Muhammad al-Mu'tasim Hakim, member of the political bureau of the opposition Democratic Unionist Party [DUP], said: "The economic sector in al-Turabi's Front has been actively trying since 1989 to form a financial, commercial, and economic empire to dominate the country's economy. The NIF has penetrated every vital field. According to information from Khartoum, one of the NIF's merchants offered last January to buy five Nile River boats, which are: Al-Qadarif, Marwa, Danqala, Darfur, and Khartoum. The boats were mortgaged to be held as a security by one of the American banks operating in the capital after their owners failed to pay 20 million Sudanese pounds they owed. Sudanese sources say that the pro-NIF merchant paid $15 million for the boats, which were registered in Limassol, Cyprus, and in Liberia to prevent their confiscation if a coup takes place against the extremist military-fundamentalist alliance now ruling in Khartoum."

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Hakim added: The NIF's merchants have stormed and taken complete control of the gold markets in Sudan. Three NIF merchants, al-Tayyib al-Nass, Uthman Hajj, and Shaykh Abd-al-Basit, have bought pure gold worth 9 million Sudanese pounds in the week before the month of Ramadan."

Explaining the reason for the NIF merchants' concentration on the gold and foreign currency markets, Hakim said: "Gold and foreign currency are the basis of any economy. So, the NIF's merchants have tried to dominate these markets to force the military to respect the secret agreement concluded between them. If a surprise military coup takes place against the NIF's authority, Sudan will face a famine, because the Sudanese government borrows foreign currency from the NIF for imports."

Sudanese sources have unveiled a sensational surprise. They said that al—Turabi's Front has monopolized the Sudanese cotton trade in world markets through a system called al-Mahfazah [portfolio]. Al-Mahfazah includes pro-NIF representatives of the planning agency, the Sudan Bank, NIF-affiliated Islamic banks, and the Sudanese Commerce Bank. Al-Mahfazah markets Sudanese cotton in the world on behalf of the Sudan Cotton Company (public sector), which has become a services office operating under al-Mahfazah.

The first decision made by al-Mahfazah was to close down the Geneva office on the pretext of cutting expenses. However, the situation prevented known European investors and importers from coming to Sudan to buy cotton, causing a pile up of unsold cotton in the Maranjan and al-Baqir cotton mills. This cotton is exposed to fire, rain, and ruin.

The sources said that al-Turabi took advantage of the increase in Sudanese cotton stockpiles to conclude a deal. He offered NIF merchants to export the cotton to Afghanistan through his old ally Golboddin Hekmatyar, provided they pay for the cotton in foreign currency and import weapons to strengthen the pro-NIF PDF. According to Sudanese opposition sources, this militia numbers about 270,000 fighters.

Majid Kamel, Iranian charge d' affaires in Khartoum, had reached an agreement with al-Turabi to export Sudanese cotton to the Hezb-e-Islami merchants in Afghanistan to achieve two goals:

The first goal was to monopolize the primary export commodity in Sudan, pressuring the existing government to strengthen its relations with al-Turabi's Front, abide by the agreed division of authority between the military and the hardline fundamentalists, and submit to the NIF's demands, which include replacing professional officers with the NIF's young men in the armed forces. Opposition sources note that the number of officers and noncommissioned officers pensioned off in the past five years have reached 4,217 officers. The NIF's cadres have penetrated the various ministries, embassies, courts, and government offices.

The second goal was to strengthen Hekmatyar's influence in Kabul by controlling Afghanistan's imports of cotton and grain. Trade in these commodities would also bring in money for the Hezb-e-Islami forces, enabling them to be independent, particularly in the light of the conflict and power struggle among the Afghan factions.

To make the Iranian mediation credible, particularly with the Sudanese side, Iran delivered a shipment of automatic weapons, mortars, and ammunition to NIF representatives in the Sarankitab [as transliterated] area, south of the Sawakin port in August 1992. Gholam Reza, director of Middle Eastern Affairs at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, also provided $5 million in aid to al-Turabi's Front. DUP leaders described it as the deal of a lifetime for the NIF. An opposition leader said that the NIF handed Egyptian terrorist Mustafa Hamzah $500,000 in January 1993 to support what the NIF called "the unity of the mujahidin in Egypt." The NIF allocated $500,000 for what it called "supporting the Islamic jihad in Africa." The NIF formed a special group of its cadres to work in Africa under the cover of diplomatic activity. This group includes Eng. Uthman Muhammad Abdallah, coordinator of extremist organizations who resides in Addis Ababa; Muhammad Abd-al-Rasul who resides in Mogadishu; Muhammad al-Hasan who works as a counselor at the Sudanese Embassy in Nairobi; and Abd-al-Jalil Hasan Abd-al-Jalil who resides in Harare. The group for contact and follow up with members of the extremist organizations in Egypt, Algeria, and the Tunisian al-Nahda Party abroad include Khalaf Abdallah Umar Yasin, Shaykh Darwish (residing in Addis Ababa), and Dr. Abdallah Sulayman. The two groups operate under the supervision of Ali Uthman Muhammad Taha, NIF deputy secretary general.

Muhammad al-Mu'tasim Hakim affirmed that Sudanese government departments serve the NIF's interests and ambitions, which extend beyond Sudan's borders. This is despite the fact that the Front practically represents no more than 2 percent of the Sudanese people, according to the results of the last legislative elections in Sudan in 1987. The government offers the NIF's merchants and supporters some commercial deals that generate big profits, despite the cost to the Sudanese people. The finance minister has issued a decision to have government financial forms printed at the Hayil printing press, which is owned by a NIF member, instead of at the government printing press, as was done in the past. What is strange is that the Hayil printing press' bid was 5 million Sudanese pounds more than a similar bid made by the military (government) press.

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Hakim said: In return for offering these commercial deals to the NIF's merchants and supporters, the merchants pay 25 percent of their profits to the NIF's fund, whose revenue is estimated at $3 billion. Most of this money is deposited in Swiss banks. Hakim affirmed: "Al-Turabi's Front owns a network of commercial companies in seven major European capitals. These companies serve as a cover for the transfer of foreign currency abroad allegedly for importing basic commodities, after public sector companies working in the commercial field have been liquidated. They also serve as a cover for Sudanese gold trade in world markets." Hakim concluded that al-Turabi's NIF is the wealthiest radical fundamentalist organization in the world. It has about 500 millionaires in one of the poorest countries in the world.

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Bahrain

Opposition Demands Removal of British Advisers

NC1904160095 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 10 Apr 95 p 12

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Liberation Movement of Bahrain condemned British support for the repressive Bahraini regime in a statement issued in which it stated that it considers the British Government an accomplice in the killing of people in Bahrain.

In a press statement, the group referred to remarks by Douglas Hurd, the British foreign secretary, regarding the repressive and misanthropic actions of the Bahraini Government against the demonstrations staged by the people in the country in the name of the restoration of order. The statement said: We are greatly astonished at the stance taken by the British foreign secretary, which is opposed to the principles accepted by Britain, such as support for democracy and human rights.

Douglas Hurd has declared the British Government's complete support for the Bahraini Government's actions to restore order. Hurd should know that the actions by the Bahraini regime are being carried out by trampling human rights and the use of force and violence to snuff out the amicable movement by the Bahraini people, who have risen up to demand their legal and democratic rights.

The statement continued: It is hereby stressed that the stance of the British foreign secretary is in complete contravention with the principles accepted by this government and is opposed to the democratic aspirations, legitimate objectives, and ideals [preceding word in English] of the Bahraini people for forging their political future with their own hands.

The group referred to the participation of the British Government and clarified that this stance particularly indicates its attempts to feign ignorance toward one of the Bahraini nation's demands for the removal of Ian Anderson, the director general of the Security Department, and all his other British associates in that department who are directly responsible for the suppression and bloodshed. As a result of their policies, nearly 10 persons have been martyred and scores wounded and 3,000 persons have been incarcerated in dungeons and some are on the verge of being executed without trial.

In addition, 18 persons have been exiled from the country in the past four months in violation of the Constitution of 1352 [year beginning 21 March 1973], the accords and charters issued by the United Nations and, in particular, the human rights accord.

Kuwait

Amir Condoles 'Regrettable' Oklahoma Bombing

LD2004185695 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His highness the amir, may God preserve him, has sent a cable of condolences and sympathy to President William Jefferson Clinton of the United States of America on the regrettable explosion which occurred in the city of Oklahoma and in which numerous children and others were killed.

Oman

Deputy Foreign Minister Interviewed on Gulf Issues

MM2004130795 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Apr 95 p 10

[Interview with Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, by 'Abdallah Hammudah in Muscat; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Hammudah] Let me begin by asking you to give us an idea about what some people choose to call a sort of independent tendency in dealing with Omani foreign policy and what others call a realistic outlook in dealing with the matters at hand.

[Bin-'Abdallah] We cannot use this description in an absolute manner because it implies that other countries do not have independent outlooks, which is naturally not true. Out of my knowledge and practice in the field of foreign political action, I can say that I believe that every country has its independent way of dealing with things, and this independence is not a distinguishing characteristic confined to Oman and no other country.

When we say that one country has an outlook independent of others, our statement would imply ipso facto that other countries do not have independence in their attitudes and that in their decisionmaking they follow the will of others.

Perhaps what prompts people to say that Oman pursues an independent policy is the fact that Oman has no problems with anyone. Stemming from this fact, it can be said that the foreign policies of other countries are based on trying to rally people and calm down matters for the sake of attaining one objective, namely, the establishment of stability and reassurance at the level of the individual's daily life as well as at the official level. For as long as there is a problem between one man and another, he will try by all means to arm himself with pretexts to justify his actions, even if these pretexts are contrary to the views of the other person.

We do not have such a problem, because we believe that the public interest of all peoples should be taken into consideration and that truthfulness should be the basis of dealings among people.... I do not mean, however, that this method of dealing does not exist. What I mean is that I believe that, owing to certain circumstances, disputes and conflicts arise among countries and this state of affairs is bound to affect dealings with others and the outlook on political issues.

As far as we are concerned, we do not have any such problems, because the sultan of Oman has sought to save

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our country from all the problems that are close, namely, with our neighbors, as well as all the problems that are far away, with our friends. Thank God, we are now living under stable conditions and all that we wish for is good and prosperity for all. [passage omitted]

[Hammudah] Did you discuss any specific matters with [Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister] Beilin in Cairo with regard to advancing the peace process, or were your discussions merely confined to discussing cooperation for resolving the water problem?

[Bin-'Abdallah] The discussions were not confined to resolving the water issue only, but covered an elucidation of the steps that should be taken for the establishment of a water research center in the Sultanate of Oman, in accordance with the decisions adopted by the multilateral committee. No meeting can take place with an Israeli official, or rather with the number two at the Israeli Foreign Ministry, without wide-ranging discussions. It is only natural to discuss problems, for if there were no problems, then there would be no negotiations. This, in our view, is natural and cannot be ignored. True, Oman is not a direct party, but a party on the sidelines uninvolved in the issues can have a clearer view of things, because his attitude can be free of the matters that bring pressure to bear on the direct parties.

[Hammudah] Have you explained this position of yours to Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinian side?

[Bin-'Abdallah] We are always clear. We do not discuss bilateral issues, for each country is responsible and has its own sovereignty. We only talk within a general framework and we do not indulge in bilateral matters. In fact we do not wish to get involved in such matters, nor do they fall within our jurisdiction. Even if we were asked to get involved, it would be difficult for us to do so, because we believe that these issues should be discussed among the various parties so that they can reach common convictions.

[Hammudah] Let us now talk about the position toward the Gulf and precisely toward Iran. The Sultanate of Oman has maintained some sort of a special relationship with Iran. How do you view the Iranian position, which some countries see as a danger, while others see it as a danger but do not talk about it in an attempt to appease it? There are some who believe that there is a way to tame it and turn it into an asset in one form or another. How do you view Iran in the light of its historical relationship with the Sultanate?

[Bin-'Abdallah] Iran is a Muslim neighboring country and has common interests with all the Gulf countries. It is the duty of all who have common interests to safeguard these interests and peace and stability. Thus we cannot have stability without taking Iran into consideration. Likewise, Iran cannot have stability without taking the Gulf countries into consideration. This is a principle which nobody can dispute.

As to the possible means for resolving disputes, we have to revert once more to the same criteria about which we talked in respect of the Middle East issues. The means differ from one side to another. They also differ from one person to another. These are matters which are difficult to deal with through one criterion, because they do not stem from a scientific or mathematical basis. They are affected by man's way of thinking and the effect of environment on his way of thinking. Hence it is difficult to try to unify all by means of one criterion or one perspective. But a search would be made for criteria and guarantees that have some sort of common interest.

Naturally people usually exaggerate the size of the problem between Iran and the Arab countries and thus say that Iran constitutes a threat. Since the start of the Iranian revolution in 1979, we have been hearing claims that Iran was a threat to the Gulf countries or that the foreign presence constitutes a threat to us. But throughout all these years we have not seen anything happening in practice.

[Hammudah] Is this theory being propagated by some specific interests?

[Bin-'Abdallah] This theory has existed for some time and it will continue to do so. I believe that peace is a vital element. I also believe that neither Iran nor the Gulf countries are anxious to spark any problems. Thus true peace actually exists. There is no problem in the field of navigation, and overlaps in maritime borders are limited and can be resolved by various means. Trade between the two sides is continuing. So we are now in a state of peace and not in a state of conflict. I believe that each of us is anxious to maintain this state of affairs.

If you were to look at the Gulf Cooperation Council's [GCC] statements, you would readily notice that they make a point of affirming the GCC member countries' desire to maintain distinguished continuous relations with Iran on the basis that it is a neighboring country and a Muslim country, though it cannot be denied that there are differences between the two sides over some issues, but then there is also a desire to seek a solution for them.

[Hammudah] About the problem of the islands, for example?

[Bin-'Abdallah] The conflict over the question of the islands exists and cannot be denied. But we are all anxious to resolve it by peaceful means and not to push these matters to the brink of explosion, for example.

[Hammudah] Could the reported presence of 6,000 Iranian soldiers, missiles, and artillery on these islands be conducive to resolving this problem by peaceful means?

[Bin-'Abdallah] I cannot understand the significance of the presence of one soldier, 1,000 soldiers or 6,000 soldiers, particularly in this region. There are 6,000 soldiers on Abu Musa island and 60,000 soldiers on the

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Iranian mainland, which is no more than 24 km from Abu Musa island. This logic is intended only for local consumption.

Since the distance between us and the Iranian mainland is less than 24 km, what difference does it make if they have 60,000 soldiers here, or 6,000 soldiers there, or 100,000 soldiers here, or 200,000 soldiers there. We cannot see the logic behind this.

[Hammudah] Was this realistic logic which the Sultanate of Oman has been adopting in tackling the Gulf issues and the formulation of its position toward Iran one of the reasons that prompted U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry to visit other countries but not Oman?

[Bin-'Abdallah] No, not at all. Perry did not come here because Vice President Al Gore was here. Perry will visit the Sultanate next summer. There is no other explanation.

[Hammudah] So you do not see any threat to navigation in the Gulf, as Perry has claimed?

[Bin-'Abdallah] There is no threat at present, for navigation is taking place in freedom and stability. How can I say that there are problems? We have been hearing such talk for 20 years. If we were to collect the statements made by the responsible officials of all parties, we would find that from the British departure in 1961 to the present the world and local press have been talking about threats to freedom of navigation. [passage omitted]

[Hammudah] Was the visit of Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf to Muscat on an Omani initiative aimed at realizing a specific objective, as you mentioned during your explanation of some other matters?

[Bin-'Abdallah] As members of the UN Security Council , it would not have been proper for us to refuse the visit of the senior Iraqi official. This is because Iraq has a problem at the UN Security Council and it wants to convey its views regarding it to the Council member countries.

We have no conflict over this matter either within the GCC or with our Arab brothers in general. All of them, including the GCC member countries, care about Iraq. Public opinion should not form the impression from what they read in the press that the Gulf countries, and particularly Kuwait, want Iraq destroyed. But Iraq must fulfill its obligations toward the UN Security Council. We, for our part, are seeking to hold consultations with Iraq to ensure implementation of the resolutions imposed on it. I believe that this policy has succeeded in bearing fruit to a certain extent, the most important result being Iraq's judicial recognition of the independence of Kuwait. This is no easy or small matter. We view things from this angle and not from the angle of the existence of a conflict between so and so nor from the angle of sympathizing with one side to spite the other. There is no such thing at all.

[Hammudah] To what extent do you support the UAE's position with regard to the retrieval of the islands?

[Bin-'Abdallah] This matter is not raised in this form. Indeed, there is a problem concerning the islands and this problem has its history, background, and time. There is no difference over these three elements between the Iranian side and the UAE side or even our side. But as to how this problem can be resolved, it is a matter that is left to the UAE and Iran to resolve in a way that satisfies both of them.

The UAE has put forward a proposal saying that perhaps it would be better to submit the dispute to the International Court of Justice. This is a likely matter. For if the two sides fail to resolve this question by cordial means and through the good offices of a third party, then it is possible to submit the matter to the International Court of Justice as a last resort, though Iran feels that the problem could be resolved by other means or that the time is not yet right for such move, and consequently it did not approve the UAE proposal. The important thing is that the two sides are making efforts to prevent an escalation of the problem.

[Hammudah] Last year Yemen passed through a crisis and a grinding war, and Oman acted as a mediator to resolve this crisis. But, unfortunately, no solution was reached and the two sides resorted to war. Oman was forced to accept people who had fled because of the war. Some felt that at the start Oman supported the South, but after the war it began to support a united Yemen on the grounds that Oman prefers to preserve relations with its direct neighbor. In other words, Oman pinned some expectations on the South, but when these expectations failed to materialize, it restored relations with the united Yemen. Is this true?

[Bin-'Abdallah] People may think whatever they like. But as far as we are concerned, we feel that in Yemen there is a very close and brotherly people. We were the first to feel the effects of the Yemeni problem. It was our duty to seek ways to alleviate the problem. From the start, our position was on the side of all, namely: How to avert the catastrophe? You may want something and I may want something else, but God imposes what He wants. When the catastrophe took place, our objective was to minimize its effect, and so we worked to organize a cease-fire and to find common ground among the Yemenis, because the problem primarily concerns the Yemenis, though it also concerned us as brothers, but not in its details and direction.

When Yemen united, we were the first to support it sincerely. We did not support one side against the other. We had no border interests, as some claim, because the border problem was resolved before the war and at the time when the two parties—the Socialist Party and the General People's Congress—were in power. Hence we had no interest in supporting one side against the other. This is because the interest of all of us was in minimizing the losses since the explosion had to take place. This

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remained our attitude throughout the war and after it. It was natural for the refugees to flee to Oman in the early days of the war. We provided all the help and support we could to our brothers in Yemen out of our fraternal duty toward our brothers. Even after the crisis, we tried as hard as we could to calm down minds and feelings so as to keep the catastrophe at the lowest possible level. Because of this we succeeded in persuading the refugees to return to their homes in the shortest possible time, after between three and four months. It is only natural for people to flee under circumstances like a state of war and insecurity. Even those who had no connection with the political conflict left their homes and villages because of their fear of the unknown.

[Hammudah] Very shortly after the end of the war Oman announced the return of weapons and other military hardware to Yemen. This was interpreted as an attempt to speed up the process of adjusting conditions to the new realities in Yemen. What do you say to that?

[Bin-'Abdallah] We have no problem either with the North or with the South and we had no plans to be a party to an internal conflict. Hence it was only natural that weapons and other things be returned to the Yemeni Republic, the country that owned them, irrespective of who was presiding over Yemen, for this is what laws and regulations dictate, since these things were of great value.

[Hammudah] Before the war a meeting took place between the Yemeni president and his deputy at Salalah, and it was reported then that the meeting was about to succeed had it not been for the attitude of some of the pro-president ministers. Is this true?

[Bin-'Abdallah] Everybody did all they could, but as much as they tried, they all committed mistakes. Anyway, this is our history. This crisis must have left its stamp on Yemen. Yet the Yemeni people remain the nearest to our hearts. If you were to go to Sanaa or the adjoining areas, you would find the people there are all families with a brother here [in Oman] and a brother there [in Yemen].

[Hammudah] Do you support adherence by all parties in the region to the agreement on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, including Israel?

[Bin-'Abdallah] It goes without saying. For the agreement is binding on all the parties that signed it. What is happening now is that the term of the agreement is about to expire and it has to be renewed. There is not one single Arab side that says that the agreement must be annulled. All the parties support the continuation of the agreement, because it is the guarantee against the proliferation of these weapons, particularly for the Arab countries, because they do not possess such weapons.

[Hammudah] But Israel is the cause of conflict. Is this not so?

[Bin-'Abdallah] This is true, because Israel engages in nuclear activity. What is required is for Israel to place this activity under the canopy of this agreement, which guarantees international control. These weapons must be gotten rid of because they are destructive. I believe this will happen because the great powers have been reducing their stockpiles of these weapons and have been suspending their tests. They have also cut down the budget they had allocated for nuclear weapons. It is only a matter of time.

[Hammudah] Some reports have quoted you as saying that Israel would not use nuclear weapons. Is this true?

[Bin-'Abdallah] I cannot predict the unknown. But I have said that those who possessed weapons of mass destruction in wartime did not use them. Israel fought three wars against the Arabs and did not use nuclear weapons. Iraq possessed chemical weapons, but did not use them against the world. So the possession of weapons in itself is only a deterrent in peacetime, but in times of war, nobody uses them, and this is a fact.

All countries are now complaining of deficits in their budgets. It is better for them to stop their nuclear activities and divert the huge sums of money they spend on these activities to social and economic development programs.

Even the great powers did not use the nuclear weapons, except in the case of Japan, and that was a very rare case. I believe that the United States will keep reproaching itself for using this weapon. South Africa also got rid of the [nuclear] weapons it had, as soon as its conditions changed. The world tendency now is to get rid of the dangerous weapons that still exist. [passage omitted]

[Hammudah] Does Oman see any threat posed by the fundamentalist or extremist movements in the light of what happened last year?

[Bin-'Abdallah] People must understand that this threat will not change the region or its countries. There will be no such thing. This is not the first time in history that Islamic movements have been formed. Furthermore, they are not the only active organizations at present. There are stages. If we were to look at the past 50 years, we would find that several political and developmental stages have taken place. We started with the Arabs' independence from the Ottoman state, then from Western colonialism. Then came the stage of national liberation, followed by the stage of socialist political forces, then came Marxist propaganda in the sixties. We have found that the Marxist movements were more violent than the current movements. Furthermore, the Marxist movements sought to dominate. Now new movements have appeared. To say that they pose a threat or that they have external links is something that could apply to all the Marxist and Communist movements. This is because everything is interlinked. But they would not have been so strong had they not had foreign links.

[Hammudah] Have investigations proven a link between the recent movements and foreign forces?

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[Bin-'Abdallah] These movements have adopted the thoughts of the Muslim Brotherhood, which is spread throughout the Arab world, and several organizations with theories and ideas that have nothing to do with Islam or politics or economics from any responsible practical standpoint have sprung from it. Besides, these movements do not act as though they are the best or the most sublime. Anyway, this is a mere phenomenon and phenomena appear and then disappear.

Iranian Naval Official Pays Visit, Tours Base

LD1804170695 Tehran IRNA in English 1531 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA—Iranian Navy commander, Admiral 'Ali Shamkhani, met with Oman's army chief of staff, General Khamis Bin-Hamid al-Kalbani in Muscat on Tuesday. In the meeting, the two sides discussed mutual cooperation in different areas between the two countries' armed forces and underscored the necessity of promotion of Tehran-Muscat ties.

Referring to the fact that Iran and Oman share the Persian Gulf coastline on the opposite sides of the strategic Hormuz Strait, Shamkhani termed bilateral cooperation as a reason for strengthening and safeguarding the stabililty and security of the whole region.

Later in the day Shamkhani met Omani Navy commander, Admiral Shahab Bin-Tariq and discussed Iran-Oman friendly ties and regional developments. Iran's navy commander also met with Omani Army and Air Force commanders today and inspected the 'Wadam' naval base 120 km from Muscat.

Saudi Arabia

Israel Criticized for Suspecting Arab Role in Blast

LD2104093395 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0610 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 21 Apr (SPA)—AL-MADINAH says in its editorial that the Oklahoma events deeply affected many people, as they saw the bodies of innocent children scattered by a purposeless act, whose perpetrators must have reached such a degree of folly that not a grain of good remained in them.

The paper goes on to say: "Although until yesterday the investigators in the United States did not wish to point an accusing finger at anyone—which is a sound policy and [shows] the necessary impartiality—Israeli and other media bodies loyal to the Zionist entity which are under its influence and monopoly have hastened to find a connection between the abominable act and those whom they call Arab or Islamic terrorist elements....

The paper stresses that the Islamic and Arab rejection of the methodology of generalization which Israel is trying to pursue is based on self-evident facts and constants known to the whole world. Extremism is even more deeply entrenched in Judaism and those who took the reins of power in the Hebrew state did so through terrorists sought by justice. It has never happened that an extremist affiliated to Arabs or Muslims wiped out a group of people standing before God in a state of worship as Baruch Goldstein did to those praying in the Ibrahimi mosque when he mowed them down with his gun. A few days ago groups in Israel saluted his memory and made him a hero.

The paper ended its editorial by saying: "The Oklahoma events are horrifying, but Israel's preempting of the U.S. investigations and inquiries is yet another in the series of conspiracies directed by the Zionist mentality against Islam and the Muslims for obvious purposes: It wants to convince the United States—the great power which leads the world—that the danger of Islam parallels the danger of collapsed communism. But how different are a religion which calls for peace and which includes peace in its customary greeting, and between a materialistic idea which does not give any value to the human being himself, let alone to religious belief?

Government Reacts to Libyan Pilgrim Flights

NC2104103095 Paris AFP in English 0928 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, April 21 (AFP)—The Saudi government on Friday [21 April] said it could not stop any Muslim from making the pilgrimage to Mecca after a Libyan plane flew to nearby Jeddah in violation of a UN air embargo.

In the first official Saudi reaction since Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's decision to defy the United Nations, Prince Ahmad Bin-'Abd-Al-'Aziz, the deputy interior minister, said: "We welcome all of the faithful on the pilgrimage on condition that they have entry visas and conform to the rules."

"Saudi Arabia prevents no Muslim from going to Mecca to perform the rites," he was quoted as saying in an interview with the Saudi newspaper Al-Sharq Al-Aswat following the pilgrims' flight on Wednesday.

Saudi King Fahd is the custodian of Islam's holiest sites in Mecca and Medina, in the west of the country.

Under the terms of the UN embargo, imposed in April 1992 after Libya refused to extradite two suspects wanted for the 1988 Lockerbie plane bombing, Saudi Arabia should have stopped the Libyan plane entering or leaving its airspace.

In Washington, the State Department said the United States would ask for an explanation from Saudi Arabia, which authorized the plane to land at Jeddah and return to Tripoli the following day.

Al-Qadhdhafi, who has thanked King Fahd for allowing the Libyan plane to land, spoke by telephone with

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Egyptian President Husni Mubarak after returning from a visit to Algeria, the official Libyan news agency JANA said Friday.

It gave no details of their discussion, following the Libyan flight which passed through Egyptian airspace on its way to Jeddah.

The first Egyptian plane carrying Libyan pilgrims, under a temporary exemption to the embargo granted by the UN sanctions committee, arrived in Jeddah on Friday.

The plane, an Airbus-300, flew in directly from Tripoli. A second Egypt Air plane was expected to follow from Benghazi on Libya's Mediterranean coast, together bringing 500 pilgrims.

Both planes arrived in Libya on Thursday.

Libyan television has paid tribute to Egypt and underlined that the two Egypt Air planes were the first foreign aircraft to travel to the country since the embargo was imposed three years ago.

The sanctions committee authorised Egypt Air to take some 6,000 Libyan pilgrims on 45 flights for the annual pilgrimage known as the hajj, which starts on May 8.

The two planes will make 24 round trips up until Wednesday to the Saudi Red Sea port of Jeddah, Cairo airport officials said. Six Egyptian crews travelled ahead to Jeddah to fly the planes back to Libya.

The aircraft were inspected by the United Nations before they set off from Cairo to Tripoli and Benghazi.

United Arab Emirates

Defense Minister Discusses Iraq, Other Issues

JN2104101195 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 17 Apr 95 p 10

[Interview with Muhammad Bin-Rashid Al Maktum, defense minister and heir apparent, by 'Uthman al-'Umayr; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-'Umayr] How do you view the Security Council resolution allowing Iraq to sell oil?

[Al Maktum] After I made my statement last January, two U.S. ministers came to me and inquired about the statement. I told them that I was still committed to the contents of that statement.

As I have previously said, we took part in defending Kuwait. Now, the Iraqi people are suffering. Therefore, I frankly told both Arab and foreign officials that we should stand by Iraq and Iraq's people.

God be praised, the embargo has been lifted partially and will later be lifted totally. By urging a lifting of the embargo, I was expressing my love for the Kuwaitis. I also urged them to build bridges of peace and love, not to neglect their brothers, the Iraqi people, and to seize the opportunity, because when the embargo on Iraq is lifted, there will not be any word of reconciliation and love that will not be considered. They asked: What about the missing people? I said that although thousands of Palestinians are still in prison, Palestinians talk to the Israelis. The question is: How can we separate Iraq and the Iraqi people from the Arab nation?

We tried to abandon Egypt. It was a disaster from which we should learn. His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan was the first to call for the return of Egypt to the Arab nation. This is what we should do now because what is taking place is a game of nations to which we should turn our attention. Therefore, I am still committed to my statement.

[Al-'Umayr] What is the best mechanism for returning Iraq to the Arab nation?

[Al Maktum] There is no doubt that Iraq made a mistake by occupying Kuwait. But should we be confined by the mistakes of our leaders? If we continue to punish others for their mistakes, the Arabs will no longer be capable of reconciliation because many things have happened in the past and we cannot adhere to them. It is time for us to turn our attention to ourselves and remain unified so that we can confront this current which is crushing the entire world.

The embargo on Iraq may remain in place for several months or a year but will be lifted one day. Therefore, it is better for the Kuwaitis to demand their rights and to know, at the same time, that these problems should not prevent the establishment of normal relations because such relations will solve the problems and regain the rights. [passage omitted]

[Al-'Umayr] Are you with the escalating tone against Iran?

[Al Maktum] What do you mean by the escalating tone? Do you mean about the islands?

[Al-'Umayr] Yes, the islands and other issues.

[Al Maktum] These exchanged statements have paralyzed dialogue. Iranian statements have prevented the travel of our delegation to Tehran. Statements in some Gulf states also prevented the Iranian delegation from coming to our country. However, our other individual dealings have not been affected.

[Al-'Umayr] Is there any Emirian concept of relations with Iran?

[Al Maktum] We maintain good relations with Iran as an Islamic neighboring country. Although the outstanding issue of the islands hampers some matters, we do not ignore these good relations. This is the Emirian policy which we always stress.

[Al-'Umayr] You returned 20 Israelis from Dubayy Airport yesterday. What does this action mean to the United Arab Emirates [UAE]?

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[Al Maktum] Frankly speaking, I was busy yesterday and I have not yet received a report on whether this was true or not. What is important here is our viewpoint. As I said before, some Arab states now have relations with Israel and signed agreements with it. We, in the UAE, grew up learning that Israel is the enemy of the Arabs. Since I was a child until now I have been hearing this. So, can we forget this and extend a hand to Israel as quick as that? We do not tell the Arab states how to conduct their policies. However, when we arrive at a true peace we will be ready to cooperate even with the devil. I mean when full peace is achieved, the Palestinian and Arab rights are restored, and the Golan returned to Syria, only then, can we talk about this issue. At the moment, we have reservations, but despite these reservations we do not want to determine the Arab policies. However, we cannot forget that what is going on is not in harmony with the concept of a just peace. I reiterate that we support the just and full peace for which we aspire. For example, the European states have not fulfilled their obligations toward the Palestinians. So, where is peace which they are talking about? Doesn't this mean that peace is still ink on paper. We will continue to have reservations until the Arab brothers attain their rights and until things become clear.

[Al-'Umayr] Why do you and Saudi Arabia oppose the idea of establishing a Middle East development bank?

[Al Maktum] First of all, tell me: Why do they want to establish this bank, and to help who? We will not benefit from this bank. Perhaps, it would be a burden to us, especially since Israel is a party to it. Therefore, I believe that the UAE and Saudi Arabia are right in their rejection of the bank idea. [passage omitted]

[Al-'Umayr] Do you face what is called a fundamentalist danger in the UAE?

[Al Maktum] I do not know why they say a fundamentalist danger. I do not call it fundamentalist or anything else. I call a Muslim a Muslim and a criminal a criminal. I treat the Muslim as a Muslim and the criminal as criminal. We support everyone who advises people to get closer to God. However, it is wrong to say fundamentalists or extremists. This is because there is no extremist Muslim in Islam. There is a Muslim and there is a criminal. I treat the Muslim as a Muslim and the criminal as a criminal. Frankly speaking, I don't think that there is one who is fundamentalist and another who is extremist. Islam is Islam, our constitution is the Koran, and our prophet is Muhammad, may God's peace and blessing be upon him. I call he who carries out acts of sabotage a saboteur and not an extremist.

One time the Egyptian ambassador visited me and commented on a news report by saying that these are extremists. I told him that there is no extremism in Islam, and he who reads history will find that there have always been movements which used religion as a cover to achieve certain objectives. Praise be to God, we always exchange opinions in the UAE. We welcome the other opinion, and we do not have extremists among us. We call a spade a spade, the criminal a criminal, and the saboteur a saboteur. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Foreign Ministry 'Deeply Regrets' Oklahoma Blast

JN2004204295 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry today said that the Republic of Yemen deeply regrets and denounces the criminal explosion that occurred in the U.S. city of Oklahoma City, killing or wounding many innocent victims.

The source added that the Republic of Yemen, while announcing its strong condemnation of such terrorist, hostile, and reckless actions, expresses its solidarity with and strong condolences to the families of the victims and to the friendly American people on this painful disaster.

Yemen, the source said, also stresses the importance of international cooperation to inflict a deterring punishment on the perpetrators of such terrorist crimes and to wipe out terrorism and violence everywhere, out of eagerness to see security and peace prevail in the world's countries.

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National Assembly To Discuss UN Resolution

JN2004155195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1508 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 20 Apr (INA)—The National Assembly will hold an ordinary session within its current spring term on 24 April.

The assembly members have been asked to arrive on time in order to take part in the discussion of the paragraphs and articles of the latest UN Security Council Resolution No. 986 and its adverse effects on the Iraqi people's life.

Ramadan Calls Rejection of 986 'Another Victory'

JN2004133395 Baghdad INA in English 1147 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, April 20 (INA)—Vice-President Taha Yasin Ramadan has confirmed that the American-engineered Security Council Resolution 986 is worse than Resolutions 706 and 712 that were devised by America as well. The U.S, he said, has been known for its conspiracies against the people of Iraq militarily, economically, politically as well as through its media.

Mr. Ramadan was addressing a meeting of the Central Council of the General Federation of Trade Unions.

He attributed the five-year suffering by the people of Iraq to the continued anti-Iraq attitudes of the United States.

The vice-president pointed out that Iraq's rejection of the resolution is another victory to be registered in favour of Iraq's battle against America and its allies and agents. He said it is necessary to redouble efforts to boost production and achieve self-reliance in all walks of life.

The Central Council of the federation discussed during its extraordinary meeting its role in the current stage in mobilizing workers to confront the latest American resolution.

Earlier, a demonstration staged by the federation headed to the U.N. representation in Baghdad to voice opposition to the U.S-designed Security Council resolution.

Ruling Aims To Meet UN Financial Needs

JN2004171495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1500 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad, 20 Apr (INA)—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has stressed that the Iraqis' rejection of U.S. Resolution No. 986 reflects their adherence to their national sovereignty and rejection of all shackles harmful to their dignity and national honor.

Addressing the 22d ordinary general conference of the Iraqi Engineers Union, Taha Yasin Ramadan said that the essence of the infamous resolution is to pay the debts and meet the needs of the UN Security Council and the United nations rather than to meet Iraq's humanitarian food and medicine needs, as it alleges.

He added that the employees referred to by the resolution are spies and agents for foreign intelligence services. He indicated that the resolution seeks to partition Iraq, pay agents, and peddle suspect U.S. schemes against Iraq.

He praised the role played by Iraqi engineers in the counterattack and the scientific and field response to the aggression and its schemes. [passage omitted]

Minister Urges Continued 'Jihad' Over Resolution

JN2004144895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1330 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 20 Apr (INA)—'Abd-al-Mun'im Ahmad Salih, minister of awqaf and religious affairs, has stressed that U.S. Resolution No. 986 is an unjust resolution and a malicious attempt to circumvent implementation of Paragraph 22 of UN Security Council Resolution 687.

During an expanded meeting of the heads of religious awareness committees and mosque preachers in Baghdad and the governorates, the minister said Resolution 986 aims at maintaining the blockade imposed on the Iraqi people to starve and humiliate them and plunder their resources.

He added that inspired by our heavenly values and genuine Arab traditions, we must reject the malicious resolution and continue jihad to preserve our dignity and nation and to maintain our people's national unity, for the sake of which we have offered rivers of blood.

The minister of awqaf and religious affairs called for releasing the frozen Iraqi assets in Arab and foreign banks and for implementing Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 as a prelude to the full lifting of the Iraqi blockade. He urged the Islamic world—leaders and peoples—to confront the chapters of the U.S.-Zionist scheme aiming at weakening Iraq and the Arab and Islamic nation to control it, plunder its wealth, and desecrate its holy places.

The conferees sent a cable to President Saddam Husayn in which they voiced their indignation at the malicious U.S. resolution aimed at dismembering Iraq, confiscating its people's will, compromising its sovereignty and independence, and prolonging the unfair blockade.

Minister: 986 To Affect 'All Aspects' of Life

JN2104100895 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0830 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad, 21 Apr (INA)—Education Minister Hikmat 'Abdallah al-Bazzaz has warned against the threats posed by the unfair U.S. Resolution 986 to the educational process in Iraq.

In a statement to INA, al-Bazzaz said the dangers of that evil resolution are not limited only to the Iraqi people's food and medicines, but covers all aspects of the citizens' life, particularly education, which is a legitimate right for

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every human being as advocated by law and language scholars, who say that man needs education as much as air. [passage omitted]

Kurdistan Councils Meet, Reject Resolution

JN2004192295 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1630 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 20 Apr (INA)—In a joint meeting today, the Legislative and Executive Councils in the Kurdistan Autonomous Region rejected U.S. Resolution 986 because it compromises Iraq's sovereignty and confiscates its will and national unity.

In a joint meeting attended by Baha'-al-Din Ahmad, head of Legislative Council; and Ja'far 'Abd-al-Karim al-Barazanji, head of the Executive Council, the two councils said that the suspect U.S. resolution aims to perpetuate the state of sabotage in Kurdistan and to cause the Kurdish people further tragedies. The councils added that the resolution is a malicious attempt to weaken the Iraqi domestic front.

They stressed that Resolution 986 hinders Iraq's fair demand to have the blockade lifted since Iraq has honored all its obligations in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

In their meeting, the Legislative and Executive Councils hosted Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, who briefed the conferees on the political, economic, and financial objectives of the new U.S.-designed resolution and its adverse effects on the life of the Iraqi people—Arabs and Kurds.

He said that the U.S. resolution aims to perpetuate the state of separation and rebellion in northern Iraq by considering northern Iraq exclusive of other Iraqi areas and by imposing the status quo there. He said the resolution also aims to confiscate Iraq's will and independent political decisionmaking.

The foreign minister added that among the political objectives of the U.S. resolution is to weaken the domestic Iraqi front and to directly affect the steadfastness of the Iraqi people after the failure of all U.S. and colonialist attempts to undermine Iraq's unity.

He indicated that the United States and its British allies and agents in the region always seek to keep Iraq weak by containing any Iraqi gains at international forums in the interest of the Iraqi people.

He indicated that among the evil objectives of Resolution 986 is to prevent the UN Security Council from implementing Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687.

He said that the U.S. resolution also aims to mislead world public opinion and contain the growing demands for ending the suffering of the Iraqi people and lifting the blockade. He indicated that through its interference in the Kurdistan region, the United States is trying to sow dissension, encourage the state of separation and rebellion, and to block Iraq's fair demand for spreading its national sovereignty.

Denounce U.S. 'Scheme,' Cable Saddam

JN2004194295 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn has received a cable of pride and support from members of the Legislative and Executive Councils in the Kurdistan Autonomous Region at the conclusion of a joint meeting devoted to discussing the serious effects of the new U.S. scheme. In their cable, the councils stressed that the United States must be deluded if it believes that it can abolish Iraq's joint history and the eternal Arab-Kurdish brotherhood, or that it can obliterate the struggle of its deep-rooted people throughout the ages.

They indicated the members of the Legislative and Executive Council reject all paragraphs and articles of U.S. Resolution 986 because it harms Iraq's sovereignty and confiscates its will and national unity.

Arab Groups: Resolution Threatens National Unity

JN2104100595 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0845 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Baghdad, 21 Apr (INA)—Arab unions, associations, and organizations based in Baghdad have denounced U.S. Resolution 986 because it infringes on Iraq's sovereignty and threatens its security and national unity.

In communiques and statements to INA, these organizations urged the sisterly and friendly countries and all states in the world to unfreeze the Iraqi assets to help it import food and medicine for its citizens. [passage omitted]

Saddam Receives Former Military Commanders

JN1704190795 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Staff Field Marshal Saddam Husayn, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, may God protect him, has received a number of fighters and officials who had the honor of participating in the Ramadan Mubarak operation to liberate al-Faw, the city of sacrifice and the gate to the great victory.

His excellency received the hero fighters Staff General Husayn Kamil Hasan, then supervisor of the Presidential Guard Forces affairs; Major General 'Abd Hamid Mahmud, then aide-de-camp to the president of the republic; comrade 'Udayy Saddam Husayn and comrade Qusayy Saddam Husayn, the sons of his excellency, may God protect him; Major Pilot Arshad Yasin, the senior aide-de-camp to the president of the republic; senior military commanders; and his excellency's aides-de-camp during the al-Faw immortal epic.

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The officials who came to congratulate his excellency on this immortal occasion have beseeched God almighty to protect the beloved leader, to grant his excellency long life, to protect him, to fill his days with victories for the glory of our great Iraq and our steadfast people, and to crown the patience of this mujahidin people with clear victory over the enemies.

On this exalted occasion, the leader, may God grant him victory, greeted the valiant members of his Armed Forces. He beseeched God to grant mercy to the martyrs and to bestow dignity and prosperity on our great Iraq and our steadfast people.

Following is the text of the speech made by the leader president, may God protect him:

God blesses the men of al-Faw, on the ground, in the sea, and in the air, and also in the Army Gunship Units. They were all stalwart men in the al-Qadisiyah and in the Mother of Battles; in al-Faw and the other fronts and positions; and in all corps and forces. Every corps and force performed its set duties very well. The navy was protecting you from the sea. While we more advancing, our right flank was facing the enemy's flank.

So, the attack took place on 17 April 1988. Therefore, it was decided to celebrate the spirit of the attack, because the spirit of the attack decided the result, which utilized the victory on 18 April. The spirit of the attack on 17 April decided the outcome of the 18 April events. When you were talking about al-Faw and said that our troops have entered al-Faw, we said: No. We will not announce that victory to the Iraqis until we are certain that not only al-Faw, but also the area up to the cape have been completely combed.

Staff Lieutenant General Pilot al-Hakam Hasan 'Ali, the then commander of the Army Gunship Units, recalled a story in which he and Staff Lieutenant General Saber 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Duri, the then chief of the General Military Intelligence Service, were ordered to inspect the situation from the air. When they were about to set out, the leader president, may God protect him, instructed them not to board the same helicopter out of fear that harm might come their way. Indeed, each boarded a separate helicopter, and the helicopter in which Lt. Gen. Sabir was travelling was hit and he had to land in a safe place. At that moment they realized why his excellency, may God protect him, instructed them to take separate helicopters.

The leader president commented on this story and said: Thank God for you safety and the safety of your people and land. Do you have any other stories similar to that which al-Hakam has just told? There are some stories that have not been told before. They may seem trivial to you, but are beautiful when considered in their historical setting. The Iraqis do not know how to put a fragrance to history. They make history, but they do not put a fragrance to it. Therefore, there are several details, which the maker of history may consider trivial and not worth mentioning since he, the maker of history, is always preoccupied with the major issues in his talk and conduct. However, these may add fragrance to history. When a reader moves from a major event or incident to a smaller issue, but one which have humanitarian meanings, he would like to go further into the events of history or in the reading of history.

In that aspect, we are definitely not very good. The reason for this is the fact that the role of Iraq in the nation has always been that of the maker of history, and not the commentator or the imitator. However, there is no harm, and it is even advisable, to pay attention to the importance of the fragrance of history to the reader, the observer, or the listener when we record history.

God bless the men. God bless you and your families. Glory be to your land, and blessings of God be upon our martyrs. Glory to your people and pride to your history. God willing, you will always remain glorious on your land and among your people, and generous and chivalrous in terms of meanings and conduct. God bless you.

Following is a list of commanders who participated in the liberation of al-Faw, the city of sacrifice and the gate to the great victory, who came to offer congratulations to the president:

—Staff General Husayn Kamil Hasan, then supervisor of the Presidential Guard affairs,
—Major General 'Abd Hamid Mahmud, then aide-de-camp to the president of the republic,
—Comrade 'Udayy Saddam Husayn, then in the company of the commander of the Presidential Guard Forces,
—Comrade Qusayy Saddam Husayn, then in the company of the commander of the 7th Army Corp,
—Staff General Nizar 'Abd-al-Karim Faysal, then Army chief of staff,
—Staff General Husayn Rashid Muhammad, then assistant Army chief of staff for operations,
—Staff General Iyad Futayyih Khalifah, then commander of the Presidential Guard,
—Al-Qadisiyah hero Staff Lieutenant General Hamid Sha'ban Khudayyir, then commander of the Air Force,
—Staff Lieutenant General 'Ala'-al-Din Kazim Hammad, then secretary general of the Armed Forces General Command,
—Staff Lieutenant General 'Abd-al-Sattar Ahmad al-Ma'ini, then assistant chief of staff for administration,
—Staff Lieutenant General Mahir 'Abd-al-Rashid, then commander of the 7th Army Corp,
—Staff Lieutenant General Diya'-al-Din Jamal, then assistant Army chief of staff for supply,
—Staff Lieutenant General Yunus Muhammad al-Zarb, then director of planning,
—Staff Lieutenant General Sabir 'Abd-al-'Aziz Husayn, then director of the General Military Intelligence,
—Staff Lieutenant General Salah 'Abbud Mahmud, then assistant commander of the 7th Army Corp,
—Staff Lieutenant General Pilot al-Hakam Hasan 'Ali, then commander of the Army Gunship Units,

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—Staff Lieutenant General 'Abd-al-Wahid Shinan al-Ribat, then commander of the Baghdad Forces-Presidential Guard,
—Staff Lieutenant General Ibrahim 'Abd-al-Sattar Muhammad, then commander of Hamurabi Forces-Presidential Guard,
—Staff Lieutenant General Ahmad Ibrahim Hammash, commander of al-Madinah al-Munawwarah Forces-Presidential Guard,
—Staff Lieutenant General Najm-al-Din 'Abdallah Muhammad, then director of military logistics,
—Staff Lieutenant General (?Yalshin) 'Umar 'Adil, assistant to the commander of the Presidential Guard Forces,
—Staff Lieutenant General Mahmud Fayzi Muhammad al-Hazza', then assistant to the commander of the 1st Mechanized Division,
—Major General Sabah Mirza Mahmud, then aide-de-camp to the president of the republic,
—Major Khalid Kafi Hasan al-'Ani, then secretary of the Dhi Qar military branch [of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party],
—Staff Major Nawfal Isma'il Khudayyir, then commander of the 3d Armored Division,
—Staff Major Wa'dallah Mustafa Hannush, then commander of the Special Forces-Presidential Guard,
—Staff Major General Latif Mahhal Humud, then secretary of the Presidential Guard Section,
—Staff Major General Gha'ib Hassun Gha'ib, then naval force commander,
—Staff Major General Azhar Sa'dallah Khalil, then commander of the Nabukhaznassar Forces-Presidential Guard,
—Major General Pilot Arshad Yasin Rashid, then aide-de-camp to the president of the republic
—'Abd-al-Jabbar Muhsin, then director of the [Armed Forces] Political Guidance Department,
—and Colonel (?Shadid Husayn) 'Ali al-Majid.

Extra Artillery Sent to Regime Force in Karkuk

NC2004165295 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The ruling authorities in Iraq have reinforced their military units deployed in Karkuk and its outskirts with more forces this week. Resistance sources in northern Iraq say the objective behind the Baghdad government's reinforcement moves in the western parts of the safehaven is not clear. These reinforcements consist of artillery units, tanks, and some other military equipment.

Resistance to Marshlands Offensive Continues

MM2004081995 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Apr 95 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Opposition Sources Accuse Iraqi Army of Attacking Marshlands"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Iraqi opposition sources have announced that Iraqi Army units have been attacking the marshlands area in southern Iraq since last week.

Hamid al-Bayyati, representative of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, said yesterday that units of 24 and 42 Brigades of the 10th Armored Division, the Maghawir Brigade of the 4th Corps, the 25th Armored Infantry Brigade belonging to the 6th Division, and the Nabukhadh Nasr Brigade of the Republican Guard are taking part in the offensive, which began last Wednesday in the mrashlands area of al-'Amarah Governorate (Maysan) adjacent to the border with Iran.

He added that the offensive focused on the Abu-'Ashrah axis toward the areas of Sayqal and al-Kabbud and along the road linking the two areas with the marshlands, "where scores of villages and residential communities exist."

Al-Bayyati stressed that the fighting between the attacking forces and the opposition forces, which have strongholds in the marshlands, was still continuing yesterday. He added that the opposition forces destroyed five tanks, seized four others, killed and wounded 200 government troops, and captured 40. He pointed out that the attacking forces were using "heavy weapons, rocket launchers, and incendiary bombs."

Since the end of the war to liberate Kuwait and the eruption of a large-scale uprising against the Iraqi Government early in 1991 Iraqi Government forces have launched numerous attacks on its opponents who took refuge in the marshlands area.

Opposition Claims Low Morale in Saddam's Army

NC2004165395 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The military institution of Saddam Husayn's regime is experiencing a collapse in morale, prompting most members to flee their units to rid themselves of the ruling regime's oppressive measures. Reports leaked from inside the regime's military institution report that members are suffering real crises relating to foodstuffs, military attire, and transport. Reports confirm that the military divisions, brigades, and regiments are suffering a grave shortage of men because of the defections. Reports refer to the deteriorating morale of the members of the ruling regime's military units.

Spanish Industries Fair Opens; Deals Concluded

JN2004135995 Baghdad INA in English 1100 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, April 20 (INA)—Spanish Industries Fair has been opened at the premises of Baghdad International Fair. The fair was opened by Minister of Industry and Minerals General Husayn Kamil Hasan.

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The fair which will last for five days is organised by a group of Spanish firms in cooperation with Ministry of Industry and Minerals.

The fair, the first of its kind since the imposition of sanctions on Iraq in August 1990, is a move to enhance friendship ties between the two countries and boost the exchange of commercial, cultural and scientific expertise.

In a statement to the press, General Hasan said a large number of Spanish, Western and international firms have carried out negotiations and concluded deals with Iraq.

General Hasan appreciated the move of the Spanish firms which organized and participated in the fair, and stand of Spanish firms which have finalized deals with Iraq to execute construction projects and power generating stations despite the imposition of the economic sanctions, noting that the said firms have obtained Spanish Government's approval to strike deals with Iraq to execute construction projects and power generating stations despite the imposition of the economic sanctions, noting that the said firms have obtained Spanish Government's approval to strike deals with Iraq.

He added that a number of Western industrial firms, including British ones have started negotiations with Iraq and made offers to execute joint projects in Iraq.

The fair puts on display products of some 22 specialized Spanish firms including samples of construction materials, machinery, equipment, electric and electronic devices and appliances and various plastic products.

Late on Saturday, General Hasan met with representatives of the Spanish firms participating in the fair.

General Hasan expressed appreciation of the Spanish firms' initiative to organise a specialised industrial fair in Baghdad despite conditions of the ongoing economic sanctions.

The minister reviewed means of developing cooperation between Iraq and Spanish firms, affirming Iraq's keenness and desire to develop and expand cooperation ties with Spain in all domains in the interest of the two countries' people.

The Spanish industrialists, for their parts, expressed desire to develop and boost relations with Iraq through the implementation of joint projects.

The meeting was attended by the ministry's undersecretaries and a number of directors generals of ministry's departments.

The Spanish delegation of industrialists on Thursday arrived in Baghdad on a several-day visit to the country upon an invitation from Iraq's Ministry of Industry and Minerals.

While in Baghdad, the delegation's members will acquaint themselves with the impact of the sanctions and hold talks with a number of Iraqi officials to probe means of enhancing cooperation.

The 38-person delegation comprises representatives of 22 Spanish firms of different specializations and seven physicians specialists in ophthalmology, osteology, anesthesia and arthrology.

On Sunday, minister of health, Dr. Umid Midhat Mubarak received the Spanish industrialists delegation and the accompanying medical mission.

Means of developing cooperation between the two countries in a way that help lessen the suffering of the Iraqi people caused by the sanctions, were discussed during the meeting.

The minister appreciated the Spanish medical mission's initiative to check patients and render all possible curative services.

On Monday representatives of the Spanish firms participating in the fair started negotiations with representatives of companies of the private, public and mixed sectors in Iraq.

The negotiations and talks focused on means to expand and develop industrial and commercial cooperation between the two countries.

In statement to Iraqi News Agency (INA) head of the Spanish delegation of industrialists, Juan Antonio, director general of specialized company in construction and architectural and engineering designs, said his company is ready to cooperate with Iraqi companies to execute construction and service projects in Iraq, nothing that his company had implemented a number of projects in Iraq before the imposition of sanctions.

Mr. Antonio affirmed his company's readiness to provide Iraq with construction materials and other raw materials.

Meanwhile, representatives of a Spanish firm for manufacturing eye medicines and skin ointments, Adil Jum'a and Nadir Hasan, described their company's participation in the fair as a chance to be acquainted with Iraq's health institutions and hospitals' needs for medicines.

In another development, the Spanish medical mission, in coordination with Iraq's health institutions started to check and do necessary clinical tests for patients who suffer from eye diseases, arthritis and osteoarthritis in Saddam Medical City, 'Adnan Khayrallah, al-Wassiti and Ibn al-Haytham Hospitals.

'Hostile' Aircraft Affecting Petrochemical Complex

JN2004123695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1020 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 20 Apr (INA)—Hostile aircraft broke the sound barrier over the petrochemical complex on 11 March.

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A responsible source at the Industry and Minerals Ministry has said that on the following day the aircraft of the 30-state aggression broke the sound barrier again over the complex. In a statement to INA, he denied the occurrence of damage in the two incidents. However, he said the severe vibration caused by the aircraft's breaking the sound barrier affects the devices and equipment and leads to their breakdown.

*Model Project for Aluminum Factory Reported

95LH0095A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 30 Jan 95 p 3

[Article by Karam Ni'mah: "In the Vast Ocean of the Siege [embargo]: A Pioneering Step in Precision Aluminum Founding"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The first step needs swift and confident action so that other steps will follow it. It begins with organization and development and the sincere feeling that the engineering team had when it laid down the first foundations of the "Precision Aluminum Founding Project." And, of course, what is more important is that it was born in the midst of the siege.

The idea of the program goes back to the late 1980s after a Western company and an Iraqi engineering team completed a cost-benefit analysis and drew up the initial plans of the Precision Aluminum Founding Project. When it became necessary to manufacture molds, it was not possible to implement the project by using technological means or even by using classical methods of founding.

And, of course, the project slammed into the wall of the siege! Here the spark of creativity in the mind of the Iraqi engineer burst forth. The conditions of the siege are a heavy obstacle, but facing the scientific void is the fate of brilliant minds. The exclusively local step thus came from an engineering team of freedom fighters belonging to the Military Industrial Authority, who are led by the chief engineer, Shakir Sayir al-Bandar. During the last half of 1993 this team drew up a technological course of action for time, expense, quality, and the establishment of a small factory created from equipment that was either damaged, out of service, or manufactured locally. The most important of these raw materials were the "aluminum ingots" that were made from scrap and that were the result of adapting the German DIN system under the supervision of the Department of Measurements and Quality Control and the Specialist Institute for Industrial Engineering.

Thus was launched the Precision Founding Project, at a cost of 5 million Iraqi dinars, in the midst of the siege by a group of engineers and technicians that did not exceed 70 people. It is possible for us to imagine the cost that the foreign company set for implementing the program when we know that the price of one ton of aluminum ingots is $10,000 and that the extracts of the present program are 120 tons a year of aluminum ingots (the primary metal component) and 50 tons a year of molded metal products. The calculations will be extremely easy, even though they are the calculations of the siege!

In a tour of the project in Areca [as published] with the director, the engineer Shakir Sayir, who showed us the products of the project said:

"Despite the young age of the program, the quality of its products has aroused interest and approval. We have produced motor parts and molds that are installed in the heart of modern industry. Therefore, we have taken a special interest in all types of molds that are manufactured through founding, such as molds for sedan car tires, agricultural tractors (in the present circumstances interest in manufacturing these is growing), molds for the leather industries, and battery and glass molds. More important than that is the production of different parts through precision founding, because, for the first time, we have used plastic to manufacture molds. This is an opportunity for us to announce that our project is ready to manufacture all simple and complicated parts by means of founding."

"Are you still using the classical system of founding or do you believe that technological development has made it necessary to use automation in manufacturing?"

"In any case it is not possible to dispense with known systems of founding that rely on sand molds, ceramic founding, casting with plaster of Paris (which has been replaced with local plaster that has the same specifications), founding through pressure and metal molds. These systems have a definite need for parts that cannot be manufactured by technological means because founding is closer to an art than to technology. This is what we are striving to do by preparing technical teams who are skilled in engraving and ornamentation."

"What about using the technological method to manufacture the materials needed for 'aluminum ingots'"? "The matter was not confined to preparing the aluminum ingots we need. We have made other products from these ingots according to the specifications needed for each item produced. This has happened because we have succeeded in manufacturing aluminum ingots by melting down scrap metal and recasting it in accordance with the needs of each kind of ingot, in accordance with world specifications that are now in effect and under strict supervision. This has made us consider establishing an independent factory to produce these ingots because our success in manufacturing them is considered an important achievement under the circumstances of the siege. It is sufficient for me to point out that our project alone needs 120 tons a year of these ingots."

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Peres Reacts to Hamas Denials on Oklahoma Blast

TA2004180995 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 20 Apr 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in the Gaza Strip today denied any connection to the explosion in Oklahoma City. Shaykh Sayyid Abu-Musamih, one of the movement's leaders, said there is no conflict between Hamas and the American people.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said in reaction that he does not believe a single word coming from Hamas.

[Begin recording] [Abu-Musamih, in English] This prove that in every action they try just to accuse the Islamic Movement. Because they want to describe them as terrorist people and they want to create a kind of terrorism in the United States. I think this is not right. There is no relation between the Islamic Movement and this action. They have their Central Intelligence. They can do their full investigation and prove their results. After that they can announce the results to all the people in the world.

[Peres] I do not believe a word uttered by Hamas. This is an organization that deals in murder. It has no judgment or inhibitions. Such an organization has no problem lying. I am not accusing Hamas, but I certainly do not believe any of their announcements. [end recording]

Peres on Peace, U.S. Role, Regional Ties

TA2004182695 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Apr 95 p B3

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Aluf Ben; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Ben] Does the danger of a war with Syria still exist?

[Peres] I see three risks between us and Syria, of which one must pick out the main risk. The first risk is that of a classic invasion by one of the two armies into the other's country. I ask myself whether such a classic invasion is really imminent or around the corner, but I do not think so. Moreover, generations of weapons must be replaced every seven to eight years, and it has been a long time since the Syrians have done this. Aircraft and tanks would have to be replaced now. This calls for a very large investment, and I do not see where the weapons or the money are coming from.

In two years from now Syria's weapons will be very outdated. I think that then they will turn more and more toward missiles and chemical weapons. In other words, it may very well be that the threat of missiles and chemical weapons will gain supremacy. The third issue, terror, is also starting to become a big problem because it has taken a new form. It is more international, and it involves weapons and suicide attacks. Most of our fatalities were caused by suicide operations, which do not represent a political change but a tactical one.

So, what I say is: Let us try to talk about a new strategy in the Middle East, how to rid the Middle East of the new menace hovering over it, how to get rid of terror. Perhaps what one should say is that peace with Syria should herald the comprehensive peace in the Middle East, a peace free of all dangers, and one that encompasses all countries and meets all expectations. After all, the difference between the peace with Syria and that with all other countries before it is that it should be the last peace. We have nobody else left to make peace with.

[Ben] The ideas have been raised, even in the Foreign Ministry, to increase the U.S. involvement in the negotiations with Syria. People talk longingly about former secretaries of state who operated in the region, such as Henry Kissinger and James Baker.

[Peres] It is a rather complicated question of whether it is a matter of meager mediation or the obstinacy of the other side. I am not sure.

[Ben] Perhaps the United States should present the economic reward that Syria will receive as a bait to promote an arrangement.

[Peres] The question is whether the Americans can do that. The change in the world has also changed America. The problem President Bill Clinton has is that he is the first president in the last 75 years whose foreign policy does not have a central focus. The fall of the Soviet Union brought about the collapse of America's main enemy. It is not simple to conduct a foreign policy when you have no enemies. I believe they will formulate a new strategy, seeing that today, unlike the past, there are dangers rather than enemies which do not have a national or territorial character.

You say America should promise more. The question is whether it is prepared to promise more in view of the change in its situation. America today has a hard time even sending a symbolic contingent of soldiers to the Golan Heights. It has a hard time promising financial rewards. [passage omitted]

[Ben] You talk about a change in the security threats. What type of army will Israel have in times of peace?

[Peres] I will tell you something that will sound visionary: We may have a NATO of the Middle East. In the event of peace, if a conflict occurs it will not be an Israeli-Palestinian or Jewish-Arab conflict, but a conflict between an old world and a new one. The Iranians pose a threat to everybody, not just to us. The Iraqis also threaten everybody, and the fact is that the Arab countries joined the war against Iraq. So, we may have regional security, in which the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will be one of the components. There is the

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danger of ethnic wars, terror, and lunatics, and there are other huge dangers, such as pollution and radioactivity.

[Ben] So why are billions being spent today to acquire weapons that were meant to tackle the old threats, such as the Merkava tank?

[Peres] As long as there is no change and no peace we need everything.

[Ben] The Arab countries protested the launch of the Ofeq-3 satellite, claiming it constituted an escalation of the arms race and a threat to them. Might such a launch not jeopardize peace?

[Peres] They could make peace and see the results. I do not see them containing themselves. Were I to see us going down one notch in the arms race in the multilateral talks on arms control we could discuss all sort of confidence-building measures. However, I do not see us getting there, and it is the Arabs who are dragging their feet, not us.

[Ben] But they make similar claims with regard to Israel's nuclear capability.

[Peres] They have no reason to complain about the nuclear issue. The distance between Dimona and Egypt is the same as it was when we signed the peace treaty with Egypt, nor has there been any change in the level of secrecy observed at the Dimona installation. The Arabs presented the formula of land for peace, and we gave back all the land. One can ask whether or not we received full peace in exchange, but it is inconceivable to constantly demand a new price. The Egyptians said okay. They expressed understanding for Israel's desire to maintain ambiguity while there is still a danger of war. What will happen after that? We said that after that we will be ready.

[Ben] Some people believe that Israel should pursue an overt nuclear policy.

[Peres] What is to be gained from that? Will they be able to write more articles? If you conduct an overt policy, people will want to know whether or not you have nuclear weapons, how many you possess, and where you keep them. What do we need this for? 'Amr Musa asked me why Israel objected to tours of Dimona. I explained that such visits were very dangerous. After visiting, one could reach the conclusion there is nothing there. Since we never claimed to possess anything there is no reason to state the contrary. What is wrong with the way things are now? We will continue to pursue the same basic policy until we reach a comprehensive peace.

[Ben] In retrospect, was the construction of the nuclear reactor justified?

[Peres] Without question. It was the most correct thing we ever did because it gave Israel a deterrent capability it would otherwise have not had.

[Ben] Why should we be willing to forgo this deterrence in peacetime?

[Peres] Because deterrence is not necessary once you have a comprehensive peace. As a rule, the world is moving toward normalization. The world has lost its taste for war. The Russians and Americans are engaged in a disarmament process. [passage omitted]

[Ben] You take pride in the way you work with the prime minister, based on the wide experience both you and Rabin have in foreign policy and defense issues. Perhaps you both rely too much on experience and not enough on your staff? Perhaps you should include more people in the decisionmaking process?

[Peres] We want to bequeath a country with less political mine fields and dilemmas to the next generation. We want to resolve these dilemmas so that the next generation can pursue simpler policies, which are less contradictory, complicated, or politically charged, and pose fewer dilemmas. I know that what we are doing, while exacting a political price, will achieve results and win historic recognition. We must pay the political price to fulfill history's demands.

[Ben] What is the political price?

[Peres] We are putting our victory in the elections at risk. Many people complain that we are making concessions. The only people who conceded territory were the Likud—this, because the territory was just the Sinai Peninsula. Since then, there are no territories, just people.

[Ben] There are not many Arab residents on the Golan Heights.

[Peres] The Golan Heights are only 1,000 or 1,500 square km. Does that constitute territory?

[Ben] Do you think that the continuation of U.S. aid to Israel is in jeopardy?

[Peres] Not for the next two or three years. Our status is safe because we were able to demonstrate unprecedented uniqueness in two fields. In the defense field, we were victorious on the battlefield five times without asking for any help from U.S. military forces. There are no other U.S. allies that have not sought the aid of American military forces. As for the diplomatic sphere, we scored several accomplishments on our own, including the Oslo Agreement and the treaty with Jordan.

The Americans have behaved exemplarily, both in war and peace. When we were at war, they eventually supplied us with weapons and ammunition, and when there was peace they gave us tremendous support. The initiative, however, was ours. Despite all the trouble we are experiencing and all the moaning and groaning that is so much in fashion, the Middle East is the only region that is moving forward in both the strategic and historical sense. Compare it to Bosnia. There, nobody has a clue what to do. The warring parties cannot muster the

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domestic will to resolve the conflict. America and Europe are confused. Nothing is working. Just compare the two situations.

[Ben] Do we enjoy good relations with the United States?

[Peres] Very much so. Our relations are good in the wider sense, not just with the administration but also with Congress, the parties, and the media.

[Ben] You recently spoke about the need to launch an information campaign to explain the government's policy to U.S. Jews.

[Peres] The policy of the former government has left a certain impression on American Jews, just as it has among many of their Israeli brethren. We also need a lot of public relations in Israel. We have to educate people because the situation has changed. We must now face a new world, but everyone is still living in the old one. No one wants to abandon familiar ways. Just try and change the public's intellectual and political conceptions. It is very difficult. This constitutes a real shift. That is why we need to conduct an information campaign among both diaspora Jews and Israelis.

[Ben] Did you fail in explaining your policies to the Israeli public?

[Peres] It is too early to judge. I do not think we failed. The government is like a bus driver. The driver cannot sit in the back and make sure that every passenger is happy. The driver must sit in front and keep his eyes on the road. If the passengers sense that the driver has a firm grip on the wheel, then they feel secure. If the public feels that we are determined, that we have a clear sense of the path we must take and know where it leads, then eventually the passengers will learn to appreciate their drivers.

[Ben] When Binyamin Netanyahu was elected Likud chairman, you said it was a great day for the Labor Party. Today he is viewed as a realistic candidate for the premiership.

[Peres] That is true; however, I believe this is less a consequence of Binyamin Netanyahu's positive qualities than of the Labor Party's decline in popularity. It is the result of mistakes we made, such as a hesitant economic policy and the various revelations about the Histadrut labor federation. But why should I give you a list of all the mistakes we made? Find them yourself.

[Ben] When will there be a new generation of Israeli leaders? Do you see such a generation in the Labor Party?

[Peres] I think that a new generation has joined the party, in the ideological sense. One first needs a new ideological, not biological, generation. If you bring young people with old ideas, then what have you accomplished? Nothing. It is better to introduce new ideas, and that is what we are attempting to do.

[Ben] Do you remain opposed to holding direct elections for prime minister?

[Peres] I think that holding direct elections for prime minister without also nominating the Knesset members [MK's] by a direct vote would be a mistake. In my view, democracy is built on checks and balances, and the Knesset does not exist merely to approve the executive's decision but also to act as a restraining force. Democracy requires checks and balances as much as a car needs brakes. I know that people tend to attribute everything to personal motives, but for me this is beyond my individual considerations. I think having the prime minister elected in direct elections and the MK's nominated by the party mechanism would constitute a bizarre form of democracy. The MK's would never reflect any political convictions or be able to justifiably claim to represent anybody.

[Ben] Many people take part in the primaries.

[Peres] But this is only a very small part of the public. In some primaries, one can get voted into office with 3,000 votes and become the representative of 300,000 people. If we are going to reform things, then let us have a balanced reform, in which the legislative and executive branches benefit from the same level of trust and inner truth, while maintaining proper checks and balances.

[Ben] But you would not cancel the primaries?

[Peres] This would be very difficult to do. I am concerned about the primaries. I fear they will motivate people to look for means and connections that will destroy our future. Primaries cost a great deal of money. One must be well liked by a lot of people, many of whom have vested interests. I fear that many good candidates will get into trouble as a result. As the old saying goes: Do not set obstacles before the blind. We may therefore need a more complex system, with electors elected in primaries and subsequently appointing the MK's.

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Reportage on Reactions to Oklahoma Bombing

King Husayn Condemns Bombing

JN2004193595 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 20 Apr 95

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the aftermath of the Oklahoma bombing, world leaders called for greater international cooperation to combat terrorism. Condolences poured in from around the globe as shock waves reverberated with a mixture of anger and horror.

His majesty the king said in a cable to President Clinton that he learned of the heinous crime against humanity with deep anger, shock, and revulsion. His majesty said the government and people of Jordan shared with him the outrage over this crime. His majesty said Jordan condemned terrorism and all criminals who support, abate, and perpetuate these ugly and cowardly acts.

His majesty expressed his deepest sympathy and condolences to the President, the American people, and the victims, and their families.

Official Pledges Help in Bomb Probe

NC2104095995 Paris AFP in English 0914 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman, April 21 (AFP)—The Jordanian-American sent back to the United States for questioning in connection with the Oklahoma City blast is a Palestinian from the Israeli-occupied West Bank, officials here said Friday [21 April].

They named him as Ibrahim 'Abdallah Ahmad, 32, from Janin and said he emigrated to the United States "at least 10 years ago." Like all West Bank Palestinians, he also holds a Jordanian passport but not nationality.

Italian police earlier named the man wanted in connection with Wednesday's truck bombing, which killed more than 50 people with 150 still unaccounted for, as Ahbram Abdallah Ammad, the Italian news agency Ansa reported.

He was sent back to the United States on Thursday from London after crossing the Atlantic from Chicago on his way to Jordan. His journey started in Oklahoma City on Wednesday night.

Italian police said they inspected his luggage in Rome where they found it contained materials that could be used to make explosives. He had already been questioned before leaving Chicago but his luggage was flown ahead.

A senior Jordanian official told AFP that the United States had not yet sent an official request to investigate Ahmad but his country was ready "to give all possible assistance."

It was not yet clear if the man was "listed by the Jordanian security services," he said, asking not to be named.

On Thursday, the Palestinian Moslem fundamentalist groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad which have carried out anti-Israeli suicide bombings both condemned the Oklahoma City attack.

"We denounce the incident," said Sayyid Abu-Musamih, a prominent member of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) in self-ruled Gaza.

"Hamas has no function whatsoever outside the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories, and there is no enmity between us and the American people," the official said.

A spokesman for Islamic Jihad also condemned the Oklahoma blast and both groups rejected any accusations of Islamist involvement.

"Jihad confirms that the Islamic movement has absolutely no connection to the incident, and rejects the distorted Jewish accusations against Moslems," the spokesman said.

King Husayn of Jordan, meanwhile, has sent a message of sympathy to US President Bill Clinton and voiced shock over the bombing, Jordanian officials here said Friday.

"It is with deep anger, shock and revulsion that we learnt of the heinous crime committed in Oklahoma City against humanity," he told Clinton.

The king said "the government and people of Jordan share with me in our sense of outrage over this crime as we condemn terrorism and all criminals who support, abet and perpetuate these ugly and cowardly acts."

"Please accept our deepest sympathies and condolences and to the American people, the victims and their families," King Husayn said.

Daily 'Vehemently' Condemns Bombing

JN2104075295 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Apr 95 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "Oklahoma—a Condemned Crime"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The horrible bombing that took place in the U.S. city of Oklahoma is a crime of a double nature. This bombing is a new chapter in the history of terrorism, which the United States managed to escape when it was plaguing the five continents two decades ago. The bloody and terrible bombing was not directed only against children and innocent people, but also against a country that employs all pretexts and motives to practice its favorite role as the world's policeman, brandishing a thick club.

The worst result of this bloody, appalling incident is the prompt accusation that was leveled against Arabs and Muslims as the parties responsible for these denounced

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and terrorist actions and the hints from various sides that this [Arab] nation is responsible for this denounced crime.

It suffices to refer to the way Israel tries to exploit this tragic incident and employ it to serve its interests to realize that those who harbor enmity and grudge against this nation will not hesitate to inflict harm and damage on all Arabs and Muslims so long as this serves their tactical and strategic goals.

While we condemn this terrorist and ugly crime that took place in Oklahoma and vehemently condemn those responsible, we denounce the evil attempts to pin this accusation on Arabs and Muslims. We also denounce all those who point an accusing finger at our region and call on them to stop trying to make gains from an incident that targeted innocent Americans.

Column on Future 'Terrorism' in U.S.

JN2104091395 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Apr 95 p 24

["Standpoint" column by Muhammad Ka'wash: "The Captive of Oklahoma"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Because Washington speaks with different languages and projects several images when it deals with right and justice, and applies more than one standard to deal with peoples and states, it will pay the price for its multi-faceted positions from its security, stability, and interests.

There is no country in the world which has as many enemies and antagonists, or a country that has produced as many victims of injustice as a result, and in view of the overt, illogical, provocative, and biased U.S. foreign policy. For this reason, Washington should expect many sabotage operations against its interests and security, both inside and outside, because the one who sows evil will harvest only thorns, which make hands bleed.

This does not mean we support killings, assassinations, and sabotage, but we are also against bias and injustice, and against the repression of people.

The nearest example of this U.S. bias can be seen in the current debate on nuclear weapons. While Washington is launching a campaign against Iran and demands the limitation of nuclear weapon programs in Pakistan and India, it speaks with sympathy and kindness about Israel, as if Israel is manufacturing children's toys in the Dimona reactor.

True, President Clinton stated that he will not be influenced by what happened in Oklahoma and that he will not be held captive to that incident. However, the truth is that the ghastly bombing may block the president's road to a new term in office with rubble and debris. He will then find out that he is a captive of the results of the unfair U.S. policy.

Writer Condemns Bombing as 'Repulsive'

JN2104095795 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 21 Apr 95 p 24

["Spotlights" column by Tahir al-'Udwan: "The Universality of Terrorism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The booby-trapped car operation in Oklahoma in the United States and the release of poisonous gases in Tokyo and Yokohama in Japan are indications that terrorism is universal and that it has become an international problem which almost nobody can escape.

No country is capable of protecting itself from terrorist operations any longer, including the United States which has the world's largest intelligence and security organs. This is because terrorism is not an obvious military power that can be crushed through military or technological superiority. Moreover, it is not guided missiles that can be downed by a counter-missile system. Rather, it is an invisible power that appears suddenly and disappears likewise, leaving behind destruction, death, and havoc.

Terrorist organizations resemble the Mafia gangs about which many Hollywood films have been made, in which the gang member turns against his master with the same weapon his master had trained him to use.

Today, many countries are suffering from terrorism after they had created and patronized terrorist organizations. Conditions have changed and these organizations are now jeopardizing these states. For example, the Afghan phenomenon is, to a large extent, only a U.S. product. However, this phenomena has become very annoying inside the United States and may other small countries that backed Afghan movements in terms of extending funds, arms, and training during the Soviet invasion [of Afghanistan].

The Oklahoma operation deserves condemnation and denunciation because killing innocent people in cold blood and without reason has nothing to do with human beings. From the premise of their religion and ethics, the Arabs strongly condemn terrorism as they have always been its victim. It goes without saying that the Zionist quarters and the quarters which are hostile to Arabs and Muslims in the United States will step up their media campaign against Islam—a campaign which they started following the collapse of the socialist camp with the aim of replacing communism with Islam as a global danger. This falls in line with the goals of those who seek to create enmities and wars between Muslims and the West. These quarters will use the Oklahoma incident to pin this terrorist action on Muslims. This should be confronted diplomatically and through Arab and Islamic media.

Arabs and Muslims are the peoples that have suffered most from terrorism in Palestine, Bosnia, and Iraq where the blockade claims the lives of hundreds of thousands of children annually. Therefore, Arab peoples can perceive

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more than any other people the ugliness of what happened in Oklahoma, for Beirut's streets alone witnessed scores of booby-trapped car incidents that killed thousands of innocent people. We deem what happened in Oklahoma as repulsive; thus we condemn and denounce it.

More on al-Kabariti's Meeting With Al Gore, Musa

JN2004124995 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, now in New York to attend the UN conference on extending the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] has met U.S. Vice President Al Gore. The foreign minister underlined the importance of peace-building in the region, which the world community and international legitimacy should give high priority due to its geographic and human significance. He said peace, which is being given a superior position in Jordan's foreign policy, requires the country to adopt a stance in harmony with its national interests vis-a-vis the extension of the NPT.

Mr. al-Kabariti reiterated Jordan's stance on the accord which calls for the universality of the treaty. He demanded that the accord be reviewed from time to time in an attempt to arrive at a world free of nuclear and all weapons of mass destruction.

The foreign minister stressed that Israel should join the international nuclear treaty since that would strengthen confidence-building among all parties and lead to security and stability in the area.

Also in New York, Mr. al-Kabariti and his Egyptian counterpart 'Amr Musa held a meeting shortly before their departure for Indonesia to participate in a ministerial meeting of the Nonaligned Movement on April 25th. The two men discussed coordinating their stances in a bid to come up with a unified Arab position on the conference's debates.

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Al-Hirawi Sends Cable to Clinton on Explosion

NC2004162095 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi today sent a cable to U.S. President Bill Clinton indicating that he and Lebanon share the sad circumstances through which the United States is passing. In his cable, President al-Hirawi noted that Lebanon, which has long suffered such acts, is still suffering from continuing destruction and the deaths of innocent people in its occupied south.

President al-Hirawi wished a speedy recovery for the wounded and God's mercy for the victims. He expressed the hope that the U.S. security authorities will punish the cowardly culprits so that we will soon see an end to the international terrorism that is striking in various places.

Birri Sends Cable of Condolences on Oklahoma Victims

NC2004114695 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri sent a cable today to U.S. President Bill Clinton, expressing condolences over the victims of the Oklahoma explosion. The cable said: We were deeply pained by the frightful explosion and the resulting loss of innocent victims.

As we denounce this crime that has aggrieved your people, we offer heartfelt condolences and warm sympathy on behalf of the Lebanese people to you, the American people, and the families of the victims, wishing the wounded a speedy recovery.

Birri cabled similar messages to the leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Buwayz Addresses NPT Conference in New York

NC2004165095 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has stated that the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty is the tool to achieve the noble objective of gradually saving the world from the dangers of nuclear weapons. He added that the periodic revision of the treaty will ensure that it tallies with international developments and conditions.

Speaking to the UN Conference in New York on this subject, he called for efforts to persuade all states to join the treaty without exception or delay. He demanded that a special clause be added to the treaty providing that nuclear weapons should not be used against states that do not possess these weapons. He warned that Israel's intransigence and its refusal to join the treaty leave the Middle East and its people under the threat of constant danger and a deep conflict. He noted that security and stability in the Middle East require that all weapons of mass destruction be removed.

In his speech, Buwayz said obliging the states of the region with the exception of Israel to join the nonproliferation system is a serious defect that threatens the region's safety and stability. He explained that the achievement of real peace in the region remains Lebanon's main objective. This requires the reduction of the level of armament in the region. It is urgent that Israel join the treaty for the desired peace to be achieved.

Concluding, Buwayz said world peace cannot be built except on the basis of justice and that the application of double standards can only provoke the feelings of whole peoples and instigate them against the world order.

'Resistance' Reportedly Blows Up SLA Office

NC2104091695 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In line with its decision to punish the agents who persist in pursuing the path of treason and collaboration and who have refused to listen to Islamic Resistance' repeated calls to them to repent, the Islamic Resistance detonated an explosive device in a security center belonging to the agent Jalal Rahhal, who is in charge of Lahd militia's [South Lebanese Army, SLA] security apparatus in Tayr Harfa, and another device at the residence of the agent Sami 'Ataya.

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Radio Urges Israel To Sign NPT, Stresses Security

JN2004162495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1142 GMT 20 Apr 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Syria has been waging the peace process since the Madrid conference, proceeding from the principle of maintaining Arab constants and adhering to the resolutions of international legitimacy. These resolutions are in line with and identical to the Arab constants because right and law are the essence of both these international resolutions and the essence of Arab constants at the same time.

Syria's view of measures and arrangements aimed at reinforcing peace, if achieved, is based on this understanding. Equitable [al-mutakafi'ah], balanced [al-mutawazinah], and equal [al-mutasawiyah] security arrangements on both the Syrian and Israeli sides will help bolster peace. Therefore, to maintain security and stability, it is necessary that Israel sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], subject its nuclear facilities to international inspection just like other countries, and disarm the weapons arsenals in the region, including the Israeli arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

When talk revolves around weapons of mass destruction in the region, all facts point at Israel. The excuses Israel is using—such as the claim that its security is threatened and that it might sign the NPT two years after establishing security and peace in the region—are invalid excuses. These excuses cannot withstand any strong argument because all Arab parties feel threatened by Israel. Indeed, this Israeli threat has turned into a series of hostile Israeli wars against the Arabs—from the middle of May 1948 until now—as demonstrated by official governmental terrorism Israel has taken as a profession whether in southern Lebanon or in the occupied Palestinian territories.

On this basis, Syria reiterated at the United Nations yesterday that it will not sign the NPT unless Israel signs it and unless Israeli nuclear facilities are subject to international inspection. This is especially since Israel is no longer even concerned about hiding its intentions to exercise military, economic, and political hegemony over the Middle East region.

This stand stresses Syria's eagerness to guarantee and fortify its own security toward all dangers and all possibilities of danger. This stand also confirms Syria's adherence to the equitability [takaful] and equality [tasawi] of security arrangements to reinforce the desired peace.

Excluding or trying to exclude Israel from signing the NPT and from subjecting its nuclear facilities to international inspection means only one thing: It means putting Israel above international law—a law that should be above and prevail over all countries and parties in this world.

Hence, Syria's insistence on committing Israel to signing the NPT means its insistence on the global nature of this treaty and thus, its insistence on the global nature of international law. In other words, this Syrian insistence also expresses Syria's deep and genuine respect for international law, just like Syria's expression of this deep respect when it facilitated the launching of the peace process based on international law and resolutions of international legitimacy.

Press Says Israel Continues To Evade Peace

JN2104090195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 21 Apr 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "Peace Constants," AL-BA'TH says in an editorial: Any attempt to evade the principles set for the Middle East peace process will only cause that process to veer from its natural course and sabotage all the available opportunities to make it arrive at its objective—the just and comprehensive peace—and put an end to the tension, tragedies, and calamities facing the region.

The paper adds: This applies to both the substance and form of these principles. The substance is based on the well-known UN resolutions and the land-for-peace formula. These resolutions cannot be divided; nor can they be observed selectively. They must either be implemented in full or rejected in full. As long as the concerned parties have agreed in principle to participate in the peace process within the framework of these resolutions, they have automatically become committed to these resolutions and subject to their clear and specified terms.

AL-BA'TH adds: As regards the form, the peace process was based on negotiations in the open with the participation of the various parties concerned, the U.S. and Russian cosponsors, and the world community. This openness is one of the basic conditions for finding the common denominator that can ensure the success of the peace process.

The paper notes the previous experience, through which the peace process has passed since the Madrid Conference, especially as regards the self-rule agreement between Israel and the PLO.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH stresses that Syria has always rejected, and will always reject any new Israeli attempt to violate the principles of the peace process. Israel must understand that its maneuvers and proposals will not yield any result.

AL-THAWRAH says in a commentary: If Israel is sincere about its claims that it seeks to achieve peace, it would have responded favorably to the principle of that peace and accepted its conditions, equations, and equitable [mutakafi'ah] and parallel [mutawaziyah] bases, and would not have maneuvered, made false statements and blamed the stalemate in the negotiations on what it

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alleges is the level of negotiations. This is part of its political maneuvers aimed at escaping the requirements for peace. He who wants peace sticks to the substance and does not use pretexts, which are feeble when considered in terms or the ingredients of the genuine peace.

The paper adds: As part of its several attempts to evade peace, Israel raises the issue of raising the level of negotiations in a new attempt to evade the requirements of the peace process, which started in Madrid, and the resolutions of international legitimacy.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Out of its concern for peace, and in response to the world desire to achieve peace, Syria has on several occasions provided fresh chances for the peace efforts. Syria has done this on several occasions to reflect its sure and sincere desire to achieve peace.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH stresses that Syria's position toward peace is principled and firm and is in harmony with the resolutions of international legitimacy and the U.S. initiatives. That position, the paper adds, is appreciated by the world, including the U.S. sponsor. Therefore, if peace is to be achieved, those in charge must pressure Israel to make it respond favorably to the principles of the just and comprehensive peace.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: For more than three and a half years, Israel has been obstructing the peace process and the efforts to achieve the just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of international legitimacy. Israel is fully responsible for the current dilemma and the stalemate and stumbling in the peace process which prevent any real progress on the Syrian track—the central and key track for any solution.

The paper adds that the Israeli rulers want to achieve peace on their own terms in a way that realizes their expansionist schemes and dreams. Under feeble excuses of security, they are trying to plunder Arab territory. They also want to disarm the Arabs and keep them vulnerable to nuclear extortion, threat, and fear and under the mercy of the weapons of mass destruction, which Israel stockpiles. Syria rejects such selectivity. Syria also refuses to be extorted or to accept any kind of measures that give the aggressor any legitimacy or leverage at the expense of rights and national and pan-Arab security.

Al-Zu'bi Receives Chinese Deputy Trade Minister

JN1904125495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Mahamud al-Zu'bi received at 1100 today Lio Shang Zi, Chinese deputy minister of foreign trade and economic cooperation.

The meeting was attended by Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Subay'i, minister of state for planning affairs, and the Chinese charge d'affaires in Damascus.

Lio Shang Zi conveyed the greetings of Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng to al-Zu'bi who asked him to convey his regards to the Chinese prime minister.

Talks dealt with the Syrian-Chinese Joint Committee meetings and ways of bolstering relations of economic and commercial cooperation between the two friendly countries.

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Afghanistan

Dostam Discusses Taleban, Rabbani, Other Issues

JN2004135295 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 10-16 Apr 95 p 37

[Interview with General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam, former commander of the Afghan Air Force and former ally of Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, by unidentified correspondent in Mazar-e Sharif; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [AL-WASAT] Does the Coordination Council, which is opposed to the rule of President Borhanoddin Rabbani, still exist after the Taleban forces killed 'Abdol 'Ali Mazari, leader of the Shiite Islamic Unity Party?

[Dostam] The Coordination Council still exists. I think that the killing of Mazari has actually enhanced this council, which will now be stronger than before.

[AL-WASAT] You recently said that you are ready to cooperate with any side. Do you mean Rabbani for example? What conditions do you set for such cooperation?

[Dostam] I have frequently said that I am ready for cooperation with any party or group, and there is no animosity between me and anyone. I am ready to cooperate with any force that can form a wide government, guarantee the rights of minorities and ethnic groups, and achieve peace in the country or declare that it will work for achieving these objectives.

[AL-WASAT] It seems you have departed militarily from the capital, Kabul, and engaged in the affairs of the north.

[Dostam] Kabul is the country's capital and our common house, and I have never lost interest in it. I seriously support the work for achieving peace and stability in the country and forming a wide central government in order to realize security in this country which has suffered a great deal.

[AL-WASAT] The Taleban Movement threatened your positions in Faryab. What do you think of this group and what are your intentions for dealing with it?

[Dostam] In fact, what you say is untrue because the Taleban fighters did not approach our positions. We in the north announced disarmament, arranged things on the basis of military sectors, and transferred the arms to warehouses. Things are proceeding well. Once a central government is formed in Kabul and once it asks us to disarm ourselves, we will view this as a legitimate step to pave the way for the steps that should be taken in the presence of a unified regular army.

[AL-WASAT] Observers expect an imminent union and coalition against the Taleban Movement. What will your position be?

[Dostam] I have no information on such developments.

[AL-WASAT] What do you think of Taleban? Who supports it? Who are they, and what do they want?

[Dostam] My information is thus far not definite or confirmed about this movement. They have not published any documents, and they have not familiarized the Afghan people well with themselves.

[AL-WASAT] How do you view the current international peace efforts in Afghanistan? Can they force President Rabbani to resign?

[Dostam] We support the peace settlement proposed by the United Nations and hope it will be the key to achieving peace and stability and forming a strong central government acceptable by all.

[AL-WASAT] In your opinion, who was behind the frequent obstruction of the international peace plan in recent months?

[Dostam] The answer is premature now because the international efforts to achieve peace are still continuing, though slowly. All this, however, is due to Rabbani's illegal stay in power.

[AL-WASAT] Do you believe that Rabbani is ready to step down?

[Dostam] Rabbani has frequently voiced his readiness to step down. However, he did not keep his promise, and I do not think he will keep it now.

[AL-WASAT] The United Nations has decided to form a transitional council comprised of eight persons and delegates from each Afghan province. Have you begun to send your delegates?

[Dostam] We agreed on this and have begun to meet the requirements of this process.

Commentator Calls Protest to Russia 'Propaganda'

LD1904214295 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Political commentator of Radio Message of Freedom has written a critical analysis on the protest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kabul administration to Russia.

In the name of God the compassionate, the merciful.

The protest note of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kabul administration to Russia—broadcast on Radio Kabul the previous night, over the visit of a 12-man delegation of Russian deputies to northern Afghanistan and its meeting with the armed opposition, i.e., the [National and Islamic] Movement—called the visit interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and against international law. [passage omitted]

After the evacuation of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] from Chahar Asiab, the crushing of Hezb-e Wahdat

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[Islamic Unity Party] and the defeat of the Taleban, the Kabul administration has embarked on some independent moves to show to the nation and the world that it is not so dependent on Russia. There is no doubt that Russians played a major role in the creation of the Kabul administration. And it was the Russians' involvement that other forces, especially Hezb-e Eslami, have been deprived of participation in the national sovereignty. To have sought revenge upon the Afghan nation, the Russians sent huge quantities of unsupported banknotes to their allies in Afghanistan. The three years of war, murders, looting, and the misappropriation of public and private property have been the result of the printing by the Russians of the unsupported banknotes. On the basis of the above accounts, it is very difficult for the leaders of the Kabul administration to exonerate themselves from the dirt of dependence on the Russians. [passage omitted]

International news agencies reported that the Russian delegation arrived in Mazar-e Sharif to hold talks with General Dostam on the cessation of the intrusion of the mojahedin, who are against Rakhmanov's regime, across the Afghan-Tajik border. The Kabul administration asked the Russian Government to resolve the matter through legal ways and in keeping with international standards [words indistinct]. [passage omitted]

How is it possible for the Kabul administration to, on the one hand, equip, arm, and send the Tajik mojahedin into CIS territory, and on the other hand the Russian Government give huge financial assistance to it in the form of printing banknotes. Is it that the Russians are stupid or are they trying to pull wool over the eyes of the world when they talk about Kabul administration's involvement in the Tajik conflict? [passage omitted]

The aim of this kind of propaganda and the diplomatic war of the two sides is to give international credibility to the Kabul administration. [passage omitted] Let us hold one another's hands and forget the bitter experience of the past and fight together to safeguard the originality of jihad and to deliver the country from this fatal crisis, and jointly fight against the new aggression of the Russians into our sacred land [words indistinct], and prepare the ground for the establishment of a government, based on God's justice, in Afghanistan.

India

Commentary Expresses Outrage at Oklahoma Blast

BK2104043695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Apr 95

[Commentary by M.M. Kotru]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Wednesday's outrage in Oklahoma, leaving 36 dead and over 200 still entombed in the debris, once again underlines the bitter truth that terrorism knows no boundaries, not that it ever will. It is a coincident that just about the time that the Federal Government building in Oklahoma City went up in flames, a major opposition leader and by all accounts the future prime minister of Spain barely managed to escape a bomb attack by Basque terrorists for the simple reason that he stands for unity of his country. Just about the same time, terrorists in Kashmir had repeated yet again their threat to blow up a holy shrine in the valley in the hope that blackmail will pay.

It is not yet known who the perpetrators of the tragedy in Oklahoma are. Some reports suggest unnamed Middle East groups. Others link it to Islamic fundamentalists, who some two years ago, struck at New York's World Trade Center. To those killed or maimed, it does not matter whose hand it was that rocked the destruction. In a manner of speaking, the dead, perhaps, are better off that they have no stories to tell, but for the rest of us regardless of where we belong, the word from Oklahoma is that such tragedies should never occur.

One can only share the agony of the American people over the killings in the home state of two legendary Americans—Roy Rogers and Mickey Mantle. One can only express one's solidarity with the American President when he said that those responsible for the reprehensible crime should be punished quickly and with severity. That is how it should be. Not only in the case of those resposible for the dastardly crime in Oklahoma, but for any one who in his maniacal zeal chooses to resort to acts of terrorism and that too against innocent people who have very little do with policy-making. Not that terrorism can ever be justified as a means to seek redressal of grievances, real or imaginary.

We in India live with more than a decade of terrorism for the most part—a gift to us from across our borders—and as such we are perhaps better placed than most to understand the agony of the American people over the latest tragedy that has befallen then. The tragedy in Oklahoma should arouse the world community into drawing a line between terrorism and legitimate airing of grievances. Unfortunately, the nations of the world are so blinded by their individual concerns that acts of terrorism spell terror to them only when it is closer to the bone. It is time that a coordinated initiative is taken to put an end to the death dealing ways of terrorists of all hues.

Iran's Rafsanjani Addresses Parliament

LD1804140295 Tehran IRNA in English 1319 GMT 18 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, April 18, IRNA—Addressing the joint session of Indian parliament today, the visiting president of Iran, Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, said, 'Having a relationship expanding over thousands of years, India and Iran have successfully deterred the West's designs to disrupt our mutual ties'.

Evaluating Indo-Iran relations, Rafsanjani said that both the countries shared historical and cultural commonalties, fought successfully against the colonial rule and at

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present mirror each other in their approaches to various issues of bilateral regionaal concern.

'So deep-rooted have really been the historical and cultural ties between our two countries, that I do not feel myself an outsider here', said Rafsanjani, adding that 'the people of Iran desire to further strengthen their ties with India and its people'.

Recalling the sacrifices of Imam Khomeyni, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in freeing their respective peoples from the clutches of foreign powers, Rafsanjani said the countries of the Third World now need to utilize their resources, manpower strength and capabilities to usher in an era of independence, self-reliance, prosperity, peace and stability.

Rafsanjani stressed the need of strengthening the Non-Aligned Movement, expanding South-South cooperation, withdrawal of the foreign forces from the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf and the restructuring of the United Nations as precursor to the establishment of peace, order and prosperity in the world in general and the Third World in particular. He also emphasized the need of Third World countries addressing jointly the problems they are commonly beset with, such as poverty, squalor, unemployment etc., and working together in the direction of industrial, technological and scientific development of the region as a whole. In pursuance of this, added Rafsanjani, Iran was ready to intensify its relations with India in the areas which have already been identified and explore new areas of cooperation, particularly in the fields of science and technology.

Earlier welcoming Rafsanjani to the joint session of parliament, Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao said that India and Iran had an important role to play in safeguarding the security and independence of the Third World and facilitating the emergence of a peaceful world order. Describing Rafsanjani's visit as a landmark in Indo-Iran relations, Rao said to the Iranian president, "Your visit reflects the will of the people of Iran for expanding Indo-Iran ties and I assure you that the people of my country desire to take the relations to a higher level of cooperation and friendship."

Earlier the speaker of lower house of Indian parliament, Shivraj Patel, thanked the Iranian president for having kindly consented to address the joint session and graced the occasion.

Commentary on Rafsanjani Visit, Ties With Iran

Editorial Praises Visit

BK2004133895 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 20 Apr 95 p 8

[Editorial: "Mutually beneficial visit"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Describing the Iranian President, Mr 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to India as a resounding success would not be a hyperbole. Coming as it did well over a decade after the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in Tehran, and once-postponed in controversial circumstances the substance and style of Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit has helped put behind the uncertainty and diffidence that has characterised Indo-Iranian relations since the late 70s. In fact, the political statements made the economic agreements signed and the cultural commonalities stressed, make obvious the determination on both sides to make the visit memorable and also place the future course of the relationship on a firm footing. The Prime Minister, Mr PV Narasimha Rao's gesture of receiving the visiting President at the airport—thus going beyond the diplomatically correct protocol—and giving Mr Rafsanjani the honour of addressing the joint session of Parliament have been handsomely reciprocated by the Iranian Head of State through his positive references, tacit and direct, to sensitive issues such as Kashmir, the Bahri Masjid and India's relations with its neighbours. Particularly poignant was Mr Rafsanjani's tribute to India's secularism, which rebuffs, in no uncertain terms, "Islamic" Pakistan's propaganda that minorities in India are unsafe. Even if his offer of mediation to resolve the Kashmir dispsute is unacceptable to the Government of India, there is no compelling reason to regard the offer as unwarranted, as it has been said in the spirit of friendly assistance and not as interference in domestic affairs. In fact, Iran's attitude towards the Kashmir question should be seen in the context of how it had often played a restraining role on Pakistan in its effort to internationalise the issue and embarrass India to international human rights fora.

Beyond these issues extraneous to bilateral Indo-Iranian relations, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, it appears, has come to Delhi to extol india to resume the leadership role of the non-aligned movement in an effort to thwart the hegemonic designs of the only remaining super power. When he told the Indian parliamentarians that India had a role to play in promoting "respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity" he was obviously referring to the need for India to resist Washington's pressure to isolate Iran in economic trade and technological matters. In a way, by stressing South-South cooperation and by facilitating the tripartite trade agreement—between Iran, India, and Turkmenistan—not to mention the seven MOUs signed, Iran is breaking free of the economic isolation through India. This augurs well for unusually beneficial relations considering that India needs allies in the West and Central Asia for political, economic and strategic reasons. Beyond the potential dividends in hard politics and hard currency, the strengthening of Indo-Iranian relations through Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit complements the historic ties between the two old civilisations.

Columnist Questions 'Embrace' of Iran

BK2004144895 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 20 Apr 95 p 11

[From the "Ecomment" column by Jairam Ramesh: "India, Iran and the USA"]

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[FBIS Transcribed Text] What a failure of intelligence on the part of the Americans! Surely, they would and should have known that Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani would be in Delhi when Mr Rubin came calling. It is petulant on their part to complain now.

But what about us? Have we not gone overboard in welcoming Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani? Was it because of the powerful NRI [nonresident Indian] quartet of brothers who have traditionally seen themselves as the nexus between the two countries? Or was it because of the Congress leadership's desperate desire to re-establish some credibility among Muslims, no matter that the Iranian leader is a Shia? Or is it because of a desire to keep Iran in check and use its good offices to counter Pakistan over Kashmir? Or is it part of a deliberate ploy to tell the Americans that we can make our own friends?

Perhaps all explanations are true. But it is indeed a sad day when India goes out of its way to get a certificate for its pluralistic tradition and for its secular ethos from Iran, of all countries. It is indeed a sad day when we allow a chief minister to use the state visit of a foreign dignitary to consolidate his vote bank, as Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav did with the active connivance of the Congress leadership. It is indeed a sad day when Indian intellectuals use a country like Iran to score points over the US. These intellectuals should be asked just two questions—do you want your children to study in Iran or the US? And do you want by-pass surgery in Tehran or Houston? Their answers will expose the hypocrisy of the Indian elite that revels in America bashing while wanting all American goodies. Ask any Indian entrepreneur where he would like to do business and the answer will be the US.

The Americans botched up Iran. More than anybody else, they made the current regime possible by their blind support to the Shah and their toppling of nationalist leaders like Mossadegh. Robert McNamara now says in his memoirs that one of the key mistakes made by the Americans in Vietnam was to underestimate and misrepresent the true nature of the nationalist forces. The American record in Iran, as in many other places, is one of chicanery, deceit and a fundamental lack of sensitivity to local concerns and passions. So be it. But why must we embrace Iran so warmly, losing all sense of balance and proportion? True, we have ancient civilisational links. But in the modern world, the question we must ask is whether our future is linked with Western democracies with a commitment to liberalism, markets and openness or to theocracies whose way of life is basically different than ours.

We have much to gain from the US by way of technology, investment and markets. India and the US have more in common today than India and Iran. No doubt we must work with Iran. But other than oil and gas, is Iran strategic to us? Perhaps, the choice is not all this stark. India needs both Iran and the US. But does it have to be at the expense of each other? If Iran has nuisance value that must be reined in, then the US too has enormous nuisance value. If we think we can open our markets and then expect that the Americans will be placated, then we are sadly mistaken.

A fashionable argument now being given is that the Americans must be put in their place. But are the Americans to blame for the perception that they are running economic policy? No, they are not. We are to blame. If the government wakes up to take decisions when a Ron Brown or a Hazel O'Leary is visiting India, then it is asking for trouble. A government that fails to educate people as to why opening of the insurance industry is pro-people will obviously be under attack as being subject to American pressure. A government that is not bold and visionary enough to take unilateral [preceding word published in italics] measures to improve relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh will obviously be lectured to by Washington. Enron cannot be blamed for the controversial power deal. It is the failure of our government to have a transparent policy that has created the mess. The Americans are not telling us to kill BHEL [Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited]. It is only the local born-again reformers who have gone overboard. There is genuine concern in America on the whole issue of trans-genic patents like for cotton. But have we tried to build a coalition of interest? Instead, we view America as some monolithic entity out to enslave us. If they are slaving us, it is simply because we have decided to be enslaved. It is that simple.

Mr Rubin's irritation may pass over. It may not damage us grievously, more so since it is widely expected that Mr Clinton will not be re-elected in 1996. But it is Mr Rafsanjani's trip that raises more basic questions. Visit he must to strengthen economic ties. However, pandering to Iran is no substitute for pain-staking diplomacy and negotiations with a cross-section of Kashmiri society to bring peace to the valley. It is no substitute for a more forward-looking and enlightened policy that brings the benefits of modern society to the Muslim population of India. It certainly is no substitute for a more balanced approach to the Americans. There must be other ways of signalling to Washington that India cannot be trifled with. There must also be a way of telling Washington that for us relations with Iran and the US are not [preceding word published in italics] a zero sum game.

U.S. Displeasure 'Palpable'

BK2004143395 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 20 Apr 95 p 13

[Editorial: "Significant Visit"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to India can turn out to be politically more significant for Asia than would appear superficially. The easy conclusions on the visit's outcome must be cast aside. For instance, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's decision to receive Mr Rafsanjani at the airport, in supersession of protocol norms, was not merely to reciprocate the Iranian President's gesture in

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Teheran in 1993. Protocol would have saved India from the charge of being discourteous, but Mr Rao obviously wanted to signal to Mr Rafsanjani that he has shrugged off the unpleasantness which was caused by the President's cancellation of a projected State visit to India last October on the lame excuse of a plague epidemic. This has made for a certain meeting of minds with Mr Rafsanjani publicly complimenting India on its equal treatment of all religious communities (a theme that would be galling to Iran's close friend, Pakistan), and by avoiding to sound partisan on such sensitive issues as Kashmir and Babri Masjid. The half a dozen treaties that the two countries signed cumulatively underline the desire of Mr Rafsanjani and Mr Rao to raise Indo-Iranian relations to a much higher level than now.

By far the most politically significant among these is the treaty that the Indian and Iranian Foreign Ministers signed together with the Turkmenistan Foreign Minister for access through Iranian territory of trade between India and the Central Asian republics. This assures an Indian presence in a region where Russia also would like New Delhi to be more active but where interaction was difficult because of the intervening territory of hostile Pakistan and civil war-torn Afghanistan.

One major reason why Mr Rafsanjani seems to have decided to cosy up with India is to covercome Iran's relative isolation in West Asia and generally in the world. Having been branded a lawless State by the United States and targeted by it for its efforts to acquire nuclear reactors from Russia and China, Iran is in need of friends. Turkey, an old NATO ally and Pakistan, whom Washington has rediscovered as a traditional friend, can hardly insulate Iran from American attacks. India is reasonably independent and its warmth towards Iran has already been frowned at by the US (the signs of this have been palpable). However, India's independent judgement in international matters is well accepted, and New Delhi should not have much difficulty in pursuing an even-handed policy towards the US and Iran. There is no need to form a Tehran-New Delhi-Beijing axis, as some in Iran would wish. But there is a lot of wisdom in making common cause among Asian nations. Mr Rajsanjani's visit to India will be eminently successful if it contributes to the emergence of an Asian personality that is reasonable, and not gutless.

Iran

Oklahoma Explosion Viewed as 'Unjustifiable'

LD2004122995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 20 Apr 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] A powerful explosion in the Alfred Murrah building, one of the most important government buildings in Oklahoma, left over 80 dead and 200 injured. [passage omitted]

Although so far no outright comment has been made on those behind the terrorist move, it is said that the coincidence of the incidence [as heard] with the second anniversary of the massacre of the Davidian sect and its effective role in combating alcohol and drug addiction in the Alfred Murrah building increases the possibility of the sect having a hand in the incident. Concurrently, it has been said that an extremist Christian group stationed in Idaho and Oklahoma states are suspected of the terrorist move. The extremist Davidian sect is intensely opposed to the rule of the federal government and the payment of tax to it.

Undoubtedly, such terrorist acts which jeopardize the lives of innocent people have no human justification. Those behind the act have no answer to provide to the public opinion of the world. It appears that the root of the inhuman action should be sought in the acts which have risen in different parts of the world on account of evil policies affecting the innocent people. Two years ago, members of the Davidian sect, which is opposed to the social and cultural policies of the federal government, were killed in an unprecedented massacre. The remaining members of the sect have repeatedly threatened the U.S. Government that they would take revenge.

Without a doubt, the Oklahoma incident is a sad incident which is condemned for destroying the lives of innocent people. All those believing in peace and security for human beings should cooperate to eradicate the root cause of such incidents. Terrorism is the big plague of our century, victimizing many nations. Unfortunately, however, hegemonist powers and governments, with their evil policies, have provided the ground for such incidents.

The Muslim people of Iran, who have themselves been the victim of terrorism for many years, sympathize with the victims of the incident and condemn the violence.

Tehran Cites REUTERS, CNN on Blast

NC2104061995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An FBI official said yesterday that the arrest warrants for two white men have been issued in relation with the explosion at the federal building in Oklahoma City. REUTER reports that special FBI agent Weldon Kennedy has described these two suspects as armed and dangerous, adding that investigations have shown that the vehicle that was used for the Oklahoma City bombing was a truck belonging to the Rider Transport Company. The same type of vehicle was used in the World Trade Center explosion in New York.

CNN reports that U.S. officials have arrested three Middle Eastern men in Oklahoma City and Dallas. But the FBI special agent told correspondents that the FBI is unaware of the arrest of these men and their connection with the Oklahoma City blast.

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Another REUTER report indicates that an American [as heard] who was suspected of the Oklahoma City bombing was arrested in Heathrow Airport and returned to Washington.

Israel Blamed for Anti-Islamic Remarks

LD2004160395 Tehran IRNA in English 1504 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Athens, April 20, IRNA—As soon as the word of the Oklahoma City blast echoed throughout the world, Zionist officials and media lost no time in blaming "extremist Islamic elements" for the massive blast that killed and injured hundreds, according to a report received by IRNA from al-Quds [Jerusalem].

Moshe Carmel, the advisor to the head of the Zionist regime on terrorism, said in a radio interview Thursday [20 April] that "Islamic elements identified with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad were most likely responsible for the blast."

Carmel gave no evidence as to what made him reach the incredible conclusion.

Moreover, the Israeli television and other media have put the blame on "Iran and extremist Islamic elements" for the Oklahoma City blast.

Hebrew radio "Qol Yisra'el" interviewed the producer of the anti-Islamic documentary film "Jihad in America," who said that while there was no clincial evidence to incriminate anybody, the Oklahoma City blast was similar to the many explosions in Beirut and to the explosion that destroyed an Israeli center in Argentina last year.

Israeli media also alluded to the relatively "large Muslim community in Oklahoma City as responsible for the blast."

Observers notice that the Zionist state resorts to the propagation of disinformation against the Islamic movement and Iran whenever is opportune for its goals.

'Contradictions' Seen in Clinton's Foreign Policy

LD2004130995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 20 Apr 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] U.S President Bill Clinton, on Wednesday April 19th, addressing a press conference elaborated on the principles of foreign policy and measures to be carried out inside the United States.

As it was predicted, a noticeable part of the U.S President's address was devoted to explaining the American foreign policy against Iran and especially intensifying economic and political pressures against Iran.

The axis of American pressures on the Islamic Republic of Iran revolves around preventing Iran from finding access to nuclear energy. The United States still believes that by exerting dual policy of threat and temptation, it can dissuade Russia and China from equipping Iran with nuclear energy.

At the conference, Clinton admits that in the words of the Russian and Chinese officials, completion of Bushehr power plants only enables Iran to use the atomic energy in peaceful ends. In other words, Bushehr power plant is in no way used for production of nuclear weapons.

The strategic contradiction and the enmity of the White House with the Islamic Republic of Iran compels Clinton to put direct and indirect pressures against Iran's economic partners in Asia and Europe, as a principle on the agenda of its foreign policy.

In continuation of his anti-Iran and anti-Islam stance, Clinton unwantedly expresses inclination that if he were in place of the leaders of Russia and China, he would have adopted a different policy against the Islamic Republic of Iran [as heard].

Clinton explicitly notes that the nuclear cooperation between Iran and Russia is not in the interest of Russia and its leaders, being in conflict with political ethics.

Apparently, one of the preoccupation of the U.S President is to create new concepts for the terms in vague [as heard] in the world of politics. In the opinion of the U.S President, Iran-Russia cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy by Iran is a breach of ethics, but the aid of the Western states, especially America to the Zionist regime for enhancing its nuclear arsenal, is construed as a model of political ethics.

Short-sightedness and contradictions in words and deeds have constantly been among the characteristics of the U.S President. But the Islamic Republic of Iran will maintain its policies based on genuine ethics at international level, without paying any heed to such politicing and play of words [as heard].

Paper Supports Rafsanjani's Comments on U.S.

NC2004120095 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 15 Apr 95 p 2

[Editorial: "Rafsanjani Returns Ball Back to U.S. Court"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in his address last Thursday [13 April], dubbed U.S. policy as 'irrational' and called on White House officials to reassess what he called their 'misunderstandings and...historical mistakes in dealing with Iran.'

In a stinging reply to U.S. threats of blackmail, President Rafsanjani warned that American adventurism will not achieve its desired effect.

Last month President Bill Clinton signed an executive order forbidding U.S. companies and their subsidiaries from participating in oil and gas projects in Iran.

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The president's statement, containing one of the strongest warnings against a U.S. stepped-up campaign against Iran, also expressed in unmistakable terms the Islamic Republic's firm belief in coexistence which calls for mutual respect and non-interference in countries' internal affairs—time-honored principles which are the bases of foreign policy as embodied in the Iranian Constitution.

Rafsanjani's statement enjoys historical importance as it portrays the Iranian president in his most sincere efforts trying to present the realities on Iran to the hostile countries, particularly the United States.

The president hit the nail on its head when he exposed the motive of the United States in seeking to establish economic ties with Iran while clumsily putting pressure on other countries to break off ties with the Islamic Republic.

In its futile efforts to isolate Iran economically and politically, its own 'irrational' policies have only served to widen its credibility gap.

Since Washington broke off relations with Iran in 1980, U.S. leaders and their predecessors have dismally failed in their dirty mission to isolate the Islamic Republic and make it abandon the ideals of its Revolution.

Countless allegations have been made against the Islamic Republic—that it is a sponsor of terrorism, provides covert aid for terrorists, is building a nuclear program, etc.—but, ironically, not a single evidence has been brought forward to prove these allegations.

We ask the U.S. Administration to ponder on the statements of President Rafsanjani, in the light of the Islamic Republic's headstrong decision to confront the adversary by, if necessary, breaking off economic ties completely.

It is a call to the U.S. and other hostile countries for a realistic assessment of past mistakes, by accepting a sincere offer to think twice before acting against Iran. Iran's offer of friendship is open to all, except the Zionist state, on the same basic principles enshrined in the Constitution.

Like parties playing a game of tennis, the ball has been returned to the White House which served it. It should know that as far as Irano-U.S. policy is concerned, the Islamic Republic will pay back the same coin it has received because it will not cower to intimidation and blackmail.

However, the American people cannot be made accountable for the mistakes made by their leaders. The Islamic Republic makes it clear that it is not against them in its righteous indignation against their erratic and adventurous policymakers.

Commentaries View Rafsanjani's Visit to India

Irano-Indian Relations Discussed

LD1704115395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0955 GMT 17 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Greetings once again dear listeners. Let me draw your attention to today's political commentaries.

As you heard in the news, our country's president left for India this morning at the head of a high-ranking political-economic delegation. [passage omitted] One of the main issues, which will be discussed during this trip, is cooperation between Iran and India towards the provision of security and stability in the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, and the Sea of Oman. This issue is of importance in view of the fact that foreign powers have embarked on new measures aimed at disrupting security in this region.

The Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, and the Sea of Oman are considered to be among the world's important and sensitive regions due to the presence of vast resources and they have, therefore, been an object of interest to the big powers for many years. During the Cold War, security in this region was influenced by the policies of the eastern and western super powers. However, now that one of the power blocs, that is, the Soviet Union, has ceased to exist, the countries of the region are in the process of creating a new definition of ways in which security can be provided in this region.

Bearing in mind that Iran and India are among the largest and most populous countries in the region and that regional changes and developments have a direct impact on their national interests, they feel a greater sense of responsibility than other countries with respect to this region, have consistently called for the establishment of peace and security in this region, and have repeatedly expressed their opposition to the presence of foreign powers which are disruptive to its security.

One of the other points which has led to the convergence of India and Iran's views on security matters is the biased approach of foreign powers towards the use of nuclear energy. Setting aside the fact that India has not signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the double standards of foreign powers in preventing these two countries—and other countries—from the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes have led to the unhappiness of the two countries. In the opinion of Tehran and New Delhi, the ban on the proliferation of nuclear weapons must apply to all countries. These two countries believe that, while the nuclear powers are preventing the horizontal spread of nuclear weapons, they are themselves engaging in their vertical expansion.

It is in the light of this shared viewpoint that our country's president has gone to India and it is hoped that his meetings there will open a new chapter in the two countries' cooperation and joint positions in the field of security.

U.S. Viewed as 'Common Enemy'

LD1604211995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2005 GMT 16 Apr 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Our country's President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani is leaving for New Delhi

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today to begin a three-day visit to India. The objective of this visit is to review bilateral ties and to discuss regional and international issues. Perhaps the existence of a common enemy demands a challenge from these two countries on various issues. This is considered to be the most important motive for increasing contacts between Tehran and New Delhi.

There is a greater need for coordination and cooperation between Iran and India in the wake of the United States' desire to assume the role of a global gendarme in accordance with the new world order and in the wake of the biased approach adopted by the powerful countries on various issues including the utilization of nuclear energy, human rights, and also these countries' efforts to create and to boost the unjust economic discipline of the world.

Experts believe that Iran and India, due to their particular common features and because of their activities in the nonaligned movement, will remain independent of power blocs and will create a new power bloc among themselves.

U.S. Official's 'Haughtiness' Viewed

LD1904172995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 19 Apr 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The U.S. finance secretary, refusing to enter the streets of the Indian capital on account of simultaneous arrival of the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, told the Associated Press that if he was aware of the incident he would change the date of his visit to India. He further said: Although program of my visit to India was scheduled some months before, I came to know of visit to India of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani [sentence as heard]. Certainly if I came to know of the Iranian president's visit to India in time I would procrastinate my visit.

Although the U.S. finance secretary has announced that coincidence of his trip to India with that of the Iranian president is undesirable on account of the fact that his country has adopted intense economic stands against Iran, political analysts believe that the U.S. finance secretary's concern stems from the fact that in the streets of New Delhi, he would not [have] this massive popular welcome accorded to the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran while he was accorded only ceremonial reception by the officials of his country. In fact, he had not seen an example of such a popular welcome as accorded to the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The U.S. finance secretary is unable to discern the reality that attention and devotion of the people of India to the Iranian president are on account of the association and closeness between the nations of India and Iran and also due to a very long and common historical trait. In particular for the Indian Muslims, presence of the prominent figure of an Islamic state is a noteworthy event that has been unprecedented since the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran.

Another point which can be observed in the comments of the U.S. finance secretary relates to his misstatement about the coincidence of his trip with that of Iran's president to India. First he declared that he was unaware of this coincidence, but later, in continuation of the interview, he claimed that he was informed only a few days prior to the visit. In case he had any major problem in connection with the coincidence of the visit, he could still postpone the trip even a few hours before embarking on it. The fact is that haughtiness of the U.S. officials prevents from observing the main difference between and official and ceremonial visit and a popular visit.

Significance of Economic Cooperation

NC1704070295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 17 Apr 95

[Commentary by the News Commentary and Research Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] As you heard on the news, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani left for New Delhi on a three-day visit to India. One of his objectives on this visit is to examine and promote bilateral relations.

Iranian-Indian relations cover a broad spectrum of cultural, economic, commercial, political, and technical cooperation. Important bilateral agreements have been signed in all these fields and joint industrial investments as well as the construction of a gas and oil pipeline from south Iran to India are examples of these agreements.

The two countries' economic relations are followed up within the framework of a joint commission. This commission, with its six sub-committees in the fields of agriculture, trade, oil, industries, transport, and consular affairs, regulates economic affairs between Iran and India.

The volume of bilateral trade is around $570 million, of which $170 million represents India's exports to Iran. The remainder represents Iran's exports to India. In view of the profound links between the two and in view of their extensive potential, this is not a very satisfactory figure, and officials in Tehran and in New Delhi intend to increase it. Narasimha Rao's visit to Iran last year and our president's current visit to India are assessed within this framework.

Similar economic infrastructures and the start to reconstruction in both countries in a bid to increase development as well as the role the two countries play in meeting each other's needs have made Tehran and New Delhi strive to expand relations.

Iran is a very favorable source for India's most basic need—oil and gas. Iran currently exports 3 billion tonnes of crude oil to India, and the project of transferring Iranian gas and oil to India is one of the strategic and important projects to increase the volume of Iranian gas and oil exports to India.

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Because of its geographic situation, Iran plays an extremely important role in the transit of Indian goods to Central Asia and Europe, something that has been facilitated by the pipeline between Bafq and Bandar-e 'Abbas. More significant than all these is that after the oil war in the Persian Gulf, India's markets in regional countries became extremely vulnerable and the sanctions on Indian imports by Persian Gulf countries with the outbreak of the plague in India caused distrust among New Delhi officials. Political stability in Iran and political instability in regional countries constitute yet another factor motivating the expansion of Indian-Iranian relations.

Thus Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to India is considered to be a major development in bilateral relations. Iran and India are now striving to offer a new definition to their relations and are trying to open a new chapter of cooperation by promoting these relations.

Oil, Gas Fields Cooperation Noted

LD1904212795 Tehran IRNA in English 2009 GMT 19 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tbilisi, April 19, IRNA—Iran and India will set up a joint company to exploit and produce gas and oil, said Director for International Affairs of the National Iranian Gas Company Reza Rostami Wednesday [19 April].

The company will be established in the framework of an agreement reached between the two countries.

Rostami said that Iran and India have also agreed to complete their studies on the marine or land path of the pipeline taking Iran's gas to India by the end of the current Christian year.

Iran ranks second as producer of gas in the world but there are weak points in its exports. Its gas exports were halted for 10 years completely after the culmination of the 1979 Islamic revolution. It resumed its export in 1989 but halted it again in 1991. However, measures are being taken in this connection.

India is willing to receive Iran's gas, but through reliable routes, he said adding that Iran and Pakistan are also separately studying another project on the transfer of Iran's gas to that country.

Rostami said that Iran has no problems from technical and commercial points of view regarding the export of gas, however there are problems concerning the supply of financial resources. He concluded that there are foreign investors willing to cooperate in the export of gas.

Dailies Comment on President's Trip to India, Georgia

LD2004101495 Tehran IRNA in English 0943 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA—Two English morning dailies here Thursday [20 April] reviewed the three-day visit of Iran's President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to India and commented on his ongoing visit to Georgia.

'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' in its editorial said that the Iranian leaders "are aware that survival in the post-cold war era for nations that are determined to safeguard their independence, in the true sense of the word, has become more difficult."

Referring to the visit of the Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to Tehran in September 1993, it wrote, "it was at that time that Iran proposed an India-China-Iran axis to confront the Western hegemonism. It is believed that Rafsanjani's current visit must have paved the way for the materialization of this goal. Moreover, the possibility of other Asian nations, for instance Pakistan, joining this axis, in view of the Iranian president's offer to mediate over the Kashmir issue, has enhanced."

"Meanwhile," the paper added, "the two nations have agreed to cooperate in various fields. India with proven capabilities in heavy engineering, electronics, scientific and managerial know-how but deficient in energy can be a worthy ally for Iran, rich in oil and natural gas resources. Moreover, considering India's keenness for doing trade with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, closer ties with Iran can be of great advantage. Actually India, having a great railway network, can be of substantial help to Iran in expanding its railway network, particularly the completion of its railway line from Bandar Abbas to Turkmenistan."

"Though presently Iran's needs in nuclear technology are being met by Russia and China, India's cooperation in this field would also be welcomed," wrote the article.

"Furthermore, closer relations with Iran, a Muslim nation, should have positive outcome in social and cultural fields for a country like India with a population of more than 150 million Muslims," the daily noted.

The editorial concluded by hoping that "the cordial relations between the two big Asian countries will serve as a model for other non-aligned countries. The challenges of the post-cold war era can be faced and triumphantly overcome by presenting a united front to the greedy powers of the world—the former colonialist plunderers."

Commenting on the same subject another English-language daily IRAN NEWS in its editorial pointed to President Rafsanjani's visit to Georgia and said "as a newly-independent republic, Georgia, too, grapples with political and economic problems."

The daily noted that "Georgia's future economy hinges on its political stability. Georgia, therefore is in dire need of the assistance of other states to arrive at political stability. To this end, Georgia has repeatedly declared that it will welcome any form of cooperation and assistance."

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Pointing to restoring of ties with Georgia after the lapse of around 200 years and re-opening of its embassy in Tehran, it remarked that in additon to promotion of academic and cultural cooperation, Iran is bent on boosting economic collaboration in view of the two countries' cultural commonalties and Georgia's repeated demand to cooperate with Iran in the fields of industry and transport of goods.

The daily concluded by saying that although Iran has so far launched extensive efforts to have peace and stability materialized in the region, its economic relations with the newly independent countries have not been as strong as they should have been due to the "lackluster approach of the Iranian officials toward the matter."

Radio Views President's Visit to Georgia

NC2004123195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 20 Apr 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who arrived in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi, from New Delhi yesterday at the head of a high-ranking political and economic delegation, met and talked with Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze. During the talks, which were also attended by several officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Georgia, the need to expand bilateral relations by safeguarding common interests and the two nations' long ties was emphasized.

The expansion of political, economic, and cultural relations between Tehran and Tbilisi in view of Georgia's special place in the Caucasus and our country's favorable geographical situation and its political potential in the region is of extreme significance. In this midst, the long cultural ties between the Iranian and Georgian nations constitute an important element in expanding bilateral relations. In addition to common cultural grounds and economic possibilities, the existence of a path to political cooperation aimed at establishing and strengthening regional peace and stability can deepen bilateral relations.

With the existence of effective elements in strengthening regional accord among the newly independent republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia, the potential and strength of other regional and neighboring countries can largely pave the way for expanding regional cooperation across greater dimensions.

Continuing contacts and cooperation between Iran and Georgia, as members of the Caspian Sea Cooperation Organization and the Black Sea Cooperation Organization, will affect the expansion and development of the region.

The Bafq-Bandar-e 'Abbas railway, which has increased the possibility for Iran's contacts with countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus, can help the Black Sea-Caspian Sea-Persian Gulf triangle with the transport and transit of goods from Europe to the Islamic Republic of Iran and from there to other places.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's visit to Georgia, which is considered a turning point in bilateral relations, is expected to pave the way for spectacular developments in Tehran-Tbilisi relations.

Ruhani: No Russian, PRC 'Surrender' on Nuclear Issues

LD2004211795 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1845 GMT 20 Apr 95

[Interview with Hasan Ruhani, secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, by unidentified correspondent and members of the studio audience on 20 April; from the "Political Roundtable" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [member of studio audience] Your Excellency Dr. Ruhani, news agencies have reported that Bill Clinton has failed in his efforts to convince the Russian and Chinese Governments to stop their nuclear cooperation with Iran. What is your excellency's view on this and what are the reasons for Bill Clinton's and the U.S. Government's failure?

[Ruhani] I think one of the main reasons for the U.S. failure in these efforts is because they are both illogical and illegal. In other words, when a country such as Iran, which has signed the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] and accepted the supervision of its nuclear installations by the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA]...[pauses] The doors of this country have always been open to the IAEA to come and inspect Iran's nuclear installations under the IAEA's regulations, and the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran have always announced that they abide by the NPT and welcome the IAEA's supervision. U.S. efforts in this context are, therefore, completely illegal and illogical.

So what is the United States trying to do? A country in the Third World, because it is independent, because it does not surrender to the United States, because of its rightful stances, and because of certain empty allegations and the suspicions that are raised against it...[pauses] They are trying to deprive this country of a modern form of technology which it wants to use for peaceful purposes. [passage omitted]

What the United States is doing is illegal and illogical and it goes against every principle. They are trying to impose their wish. I believe the issue is one of honor for the Chinese and the Russians. In other words, if they surrender to the United States, they will lose face internationally and their own people will think they have suffered a great defeat.

In addition, the days when the United States used say something to another country and it would accept what the United States said unconditionally are, more or less, over. [passage omitted]

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I don't believe the Chinese will surrender. The Russians, too, although their country is not as stable as it could be, I don't think they will sacrifice their political honor for the sake of the United States. [passage omitted]

Russian Envoy on Ties, U.S. 'Allegations'

NC2104085195 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 18 Apr 95 p 11

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian ambassador to Iran said in Tehran that his country will not accept any suggestions by the United States regarding broadening relations with other countries and in particular, the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In an interview with the Central News Unit correspondent, [Sergey] Tretyakov stated the unswerving position of his country regarding multilateral cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran and its adherence to the implementation of the agreement signed between the two countries on nuclear cooperation. He added: Not only does nuclear cooperation between Iran and Russia displease the United States, but the tradition of cooperation between the two countries does too.

The Russian ambassador also said: In the past two years, the United States has been expressing its overt opposition to the agreement on nuclear cooperation between Tehran and Moscow. So far it has not spared any efforts to make Moscow renege on implementing the agreement.

Stressing that the strengthening of relations between Iran and Russia is not favored by the United States, he said: The recent efforts by the United States did not yield the desired results and this is due to Russia's independent decisionmaking.

Tretyakov emphasized that Russia is an independent country and makes its own decisions about which country it should broaden relations with and does not accept Washington's recommendations in this regard.

Commenting on U.S. claims of the manufacture of nuclear weapons at the Bushehr power plant once it is completed, the Russian ambassador said: The U.S. allegations in this regard are incorrect and the United States is well aware that this power plant is incapable of producing nuclear weapons as regards the separation [tafkiki] process. He stressed: Despite the pressure from the United States and its allies on Russia, Moscow is determined to implement and complete the Bushehr nuclear power plant and will continue to act independently in decisionmaking.

He emphasized: I believe that Washington's efforts, including Clinton's meeting with Boris Yeltsin, will not have any more results than we are seeing now.

Tretyakov reiterated the Islamic Republic of Iran's peaceful utilization of nuclear energy and added: Iran has signed an agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency which guarantees the peaceful activities of the Iranian nuclear installations. The Russian ambassador in Tehran predicted superb relations between Iran and Russia in the future and expressed optimism at the recent dynamism in the relations between the two countries, saying that these relations should broaden even further for the reciprocal benefits of the two countries.

Ambassador in Moscow on Agricultural Cooperation

LD2004105795 Tehran IRNA in English 1004 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, April 20, IRNA—The Iranian ambassador in Moscow, Mehdi Safari, in a meeting with Aleksandr Zaveryukha, Russian deputy prime minister in agriculture, Wednesday [19 April] discussed various fields of mutual cooperation.

Outlining recent developments in economic and commercial ties between the two countries, Safari emphasised Iran's readiness to expand cooperation in agricultural fields including research and development, chemical fertilizer, exchange of agricultural products and foodstuff, paperstock and exchange of experts.

The Russian deputy prime minister pointed to the friendly and historical relations between the two countries and emphasised that Iran's political independence is highly respected by Russia.

Zaveryukha underlined the need for the expansion of bilateral relations in every aspects and hoped that through exchange of experts, signing contracts in the area of fishing, using the Caspian Sea resources as well as mutual visits by agriculture ministers, cooperation in agriculture reach a satisfactory level.

He also said Russia is ready to sell grain to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Official Discusses Syria, Lebanon Visit

NC2004174595 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 17 Apr 95 p 6

[TEHRAN TIMES Political Desk]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran—As head of an Iranian delegation, Hojjat ol-Eslam Khomsari, director of the Department of Middle East and North African Affairs of the Foreign Ministry recently paid an official visit to Syria and Lebanon. Khonsari had an exclusive interview with the TEHRAN TIMES.

"I was in Lebanon in mid-March 1995; I had a meeting with Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, exchanging views over the latest developments in the region. Iran has a clear stance on the aggressive Israeli attitude, always on the side of the Hizballahs. We fully support their heroic resistance to the Zionist regime," said Khonsari.

"Lebanese Muslims have stood firmly against all Zionist threats, aggression, air raids and ground incursions to the cities in southern Lebanon.

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"Iran has invariably condemned such atrocities; we are sure that these transgressions will lead the Zionists nowhere. The Lebanese will take back the land usurped by the Zionists and ultimately eliminate the Zionists and their mercenaries, the army of Antoine Lahd, thus reunifying Lebanon."

In answer to the question of how Palestinians view the peace process Khonsari said, "During my stay in Beirut, I met a leading Palestinian official of the Islamic Jihad at our embassy. He talked of how valiantly they fought and tried to repel the Zionists' influence, foiling their conspiracies. The Palestinians' resistance towards the new conspiracies is an honor for their great Islamic nation and the freedom fighters of the world.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran does not recognize Israel as an entity. You know that the Zionists came from different countries, usurping Palestinian land, and, by force and conspiracy, established an illegitimate entity as the state of Israel.

"If you consider the Middle East peace process, which was initially planned in Madrid, you will realize that although they are promoting the Middle East peace process as a means of bringing peace, stability, security, and economic development, in reality we see that the Zionists are not interested in the creation of stability in the region.

"Further, you will realize that the existence of such a state cannot be based on the philosophy of serenity, security, and stability, for the Arab nations and, generally, Muslims have not reached a consensus to coexist in peace with the Zionists.

"After the signing of the Camp David agreement, Egypt is not even ready to accept the Zionists and have normal relations with them. You see a great number of Zionists traveling to Egypt as tourists, but you do not see Egyptians traveling to Israel.

"It is possible that Israel was forced into the Middle East peace process. It is also possible that their acceptance of the Middle East peace process is based on their intention of attaining both de facto and de jure recognition.

"But you also realize that the problems and difficulties the Zionist regime is creating in this Middle East process shows that it is not interested at all in achieving a lasting peace in the area. It is not enthusiastic in returning the land it usurped in the 1967 war. The Madrid agreement was based on the enforcement and realization of United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338, passed by the Security Council.

"The Zionist regime has failed to show its goodwill in the implementation and realization of UN demands. You have heard Zionist officials announce that Bait-ul-Moqaddas is the capital of the usurped land. This city should be returned land. This city should be returned to Arabs according to the United Nations resolution. The Zionist regime is not willing or prepared to hand over the Golan Heights to the Syrians.

"Palestinians have not been granted their rights delineated in the Oslo agreement. Today, 'Arafat is functioning at the level of a mayor; his authority does not go beyond that level.

"The United States is exerting a lot of pressure on Arab countries. We have heard from official Syrian sources that they are not willing to bend to U.S. pressure, becoming a part of this big conspiracy. Syria has clearly stated that it is not willing to enter into any peace negotiations without the return of Golan Heights, the occupied southern part of Lebanon and western al-Biqa' Valley.

"There will be no peace between the Zionist regime and Syria without meeting Syria's conditions. Further, I strongly hold that the Zionist regime is not prepared to meet these conditions at this stage. Therefore, I do not think that any initiative will be made before the U.S. presidential elections in 1996 and Israel's national elections at about the same time. I do not foresee a settlement between the Zionist regime and Syria before 1997.

"I do not believe this process to be a peace process. The Likud Party does not believe in this process or the Oslo agreement. So the efforts of the Labor Party which has negotiated a very slippery and superficial peace with the Arabs, will become futile once the Likud Party comes to power.

"I would like to close by saying that, in its tireless endeavors, the Palestinian resistance will be triumphant.

S. African Delegation Calls For Expanding Ties

LD2004111595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Following a visit to our country by a South African delegation comprising officials from that country's ministries of foreign affairs, trade, industry, and mining, a joint press communique was released today stressing the need for expanding bilateral ties in all fields.

According to an IRNA report, among the agreements reached between the two countries are trade cooperation, exchange visits by parliamentary delegations, cooperation on regional and international issues, and opening of the South African Embassy in Tehran.

Turkish Prime Minister's U.S. Visit Viewed

NC2004202195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 19 Apr 95

[Unattributed commentary: "Prime Minister Ciller's Visit to Washington"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Tansu Ciller was received by President Clinton at the White House on

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Tuesday, 18 April. A White House disclosure said later that Clinton and Ciller exchanged views on the relations between Turkey and the United States, economic problems, and the importance of Turkey's role in the effort that has been made since the Cold War ended to maintain regional security. The political experts are convinced that the most important issue Clinton and Ciller discussed was Turkey's military attack against northern Iraq and the Turkish Government's political approach. The matter is important for Turkey because the United States has urged Ankara to establish a calendar for the withdrawal of the Turkish military forces from northern Iraq. In view of that, the Turkish officials have been observed to make an effort to secure Washington's support for Turkey's military operations in Kurdistan.

Meanwhile, the political circles in Ankara have been worried by the two-faced U.S. policy on the Kurds in Turkey. Although it has welcomed Clinton's decision to oppose the establishment of a Kurdish parliament in exile, it has been worried by the U.S. pressure on Turkey to force it to recognize political and cultural autonomy rights to the Kurds. Turkey believes that this is impossible because the recognition of autonomy rights to the Kurds will further encourage them and create a new situation.

Meanwhile, it is common knowledge that Washington regards Turkey as a strategic country that has closely cooperated with the United States and complied with Western policies to obstruct the strengthening of the Islamic trend in the Middle East particularly after the Cold War era ended. Ankara is convinced that this is in Turkey's advantage.

It will be recalled that Turkey's role in the region became more important as a result of the developments that took place in the Caucasus and the Balkan countries after the collapse of the former Soviet Union. So, Prime Minister Ciller hopes to secure additional concessions from Washington by stressing Turkey's special role in the region.

Radio on Reasons for Readiness of Armed Forces

NC2004122295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 20 Apr 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] During a meeting with personnel of the Islamic Republic's Armed Forces yesterday, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, esteemed leader of the Islamic Revolution, explained the plots hatched by the enemies of the revolution and said that their objectives were to destroy or weaken the army of the Islamic Republic. The esteemed leader stated that despite all the plots by the enemy today our army is stronger, better organized, and more revolutionary and religious than at any other time during the 16 years of the revolution; today our army is in such a position of strength and self-confidence that the nation feels national pride and does not fear the enemy's sinister propaganda.

The commander in chief stressed the need to further strengthen the Armed Forces and listed the ways in which their readiness can be maintained. He stated that the commanders should attach importance to organization with particular order and discipline in the Armed Forces and should strive for the spiritual support of manpower. The esteemed leader of the revolution described the enemies' propaganda about Iran's warmongering nature as nonsensical and said: We are not warmongers. We are against warmongering in accordance with our doctrine. Our principles demand that we must spread the message of friendship, peace, kindness, security, and tranquility. Naturally we demand tranquility to convey this message and the other just messages of the Islamic Republic to the world. But the bullying enemy who is afraid of our message and our good tidings is trying to create a false commotion and disseminate propaganda to prevent this message from being spread globally to reach the ears of freedomseeking people.

In the current arena, where arrogant powers oppose the propagation of any idea that is contrary to their unjust rights and resort to various tricks to confront this, the high degree of the Islamic Republic's strength is the most important element for advancing Iran's objectives. The Armed Forces, representing one of the most significant elements of power, can pave the way for fulfilling these objectives.

The readiness of the Armed Forces, which can neutralize aggression by the enemy, can also work as a deterrent to prevent any enemy from entertaining thoughts of attacking the Islamic Republic. During the eight years of sacred defense the Armed Forces of Islamic Iran displayed this readiness and capability, and, having acquired outstanding experiences during the imposed war, they are now more ready today.

Although the enemies of the Islamic Revolution are trying to portray Iran as a warmonger and the readiness and strength of its Armed Forces as a threat to neighboring countries so that they can thus find a way to establish their presence in the region by destroying Iran's relations with its neighbors and painting a picture of instability in the region, the history of the region and Iran's behavior throughout history refute such allegations and show that Iran has never pursued expansionist and warmongering objectives in the strengthening of its Armed Forces.

The persistent plots and threats by the enemies of the Islamic Revolution have placed Iran in front of the reality that it should always be ready to defend itself and to safeguard its existence. But this readiness does not mean an attempt at aggression; it is an attempt to have a defense and deterrent to the enemies of the revolution.

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*Iran Repays $1.6 Billion in Debts Annually

95LA0157E Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 5 Feb 95 p 13

[Report on interview with Mohsen Nurbakhsh, director general of the Central Bank, by unidentifed correspondents, on 3 February 1995, in Rome; place not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Rome, IRNA—The director general of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in a meeting with economic correspondents of ANSA NEWS AGENCY and EL MONDO and LA STAMPA newspapers Friday afternoon, described the policies of the Second Economic Development Plan of Iran.

Mr. Nurbakhsh said: The projection of revenues in this plan is realistic. For example, the average price of each barrel of oil has been estimated to be $14.50-$15.

The director of the Central Bank added: It is anticipated that in the course of the Second Development Plan, Iran will repay $1.6 billion in debts yearly, in which case by the end of the plan it will have seriously reduced the size of its debt.

He announced the volume of foreign currency expenditures in the course of this plan to be about $72 billion and added: This amount will be invested mainly in the petrochemical, agricultural, oil, energy, and communication sectors.

In another part of his interview, he said: In the above-mentioned sectors, Italian industries are ready to cooperate with Iran, provided the government insurance institution in this country, Sacheh, helps them.

He regarded the Sacheh Insurance Service as the only factor in the success of Italian industries in competing with other industrial countries to maintain a presence in Iran.

The director of the Central Bank also in an interview with IRNA called the results of his visit successful and added: The banking obstacles that could block the economic relations between Iran and Italy have been removed. The problem of late debt payments to Italian companies covered by Sacheh has been completely resolved, and, based on a contract that will be signed in early Esfand [20 February-20 March], the Islamic Republic of Iran will pay 25 percent of its debt to these creditors in cash, and the remainder will be settled from Tir 1375 [22 June-22 July 1996] in four years in the form of 16 three-month installments.

In continuation, the director of the Central Bank added: Considering that the framework of the Second Economic Development Plan of the country has been determined, Italy can, like other countries, play an active role in various sectors in Iran and engage in the transfer of technology and technical knowledge.

He added: Italy is one of the main partners of Iran, and we encourage the development of relations with this country.

Satellite Dishes in Tehran To Be Removed

LD2004144995 Tehran IRNA in English 1348 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, April 20, IRNA—As of Saturday [22 April], security forces with warrants from the judiciary and the police, will remove the satellite dishes from rooftops, head of the Iranian security forces, Brigadier Reza Seyfollahi told reporters on Thursday.

According to the law, the satellite dishes and their accessories will be confiscated and delivered to the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), Seyfollahi said.

Foreign missions in Tehran as well as the radio and television, Ministry of Post, Telephone and Telegraph and Research institutes are excluded, he said.

Import and sale of satellite dishes are also banned.

Seyfollahi called on Iranians to voluntarily take down their satellite dishes before any action by the police.

He also called on the citizens to report any cases of illegal use of satellite dishes to the nearest police station.

Government Lifts Restrictions on VCRs, Cameras

LD2004174095 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1600 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Department of Supervision and Evaluation of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance announced: In accordance with Cabinet approval, the importation of video cameras and video cassette recorders by those travelling to the country from abroad is now permissible and their transportation inside the country is allowed.

The announcement also states that video filming by non-professionals in public places is permissible only for family use.

Conditions of Women at Evin Prison Viewed

95LA0130G Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 22 Jan 95 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] News Service—By order of the chief of the judicial power, for the purpose of investigating the condition of imprisoned women, to find the roots of their problems, and to become aware of special issues that sometimes go unmentioned in the prisons, the chief of the judiciary's Office of Women's Affairs, Ms Yazdi, along with two aides from that office, visited Women's Ward I at Evin Prison.

During this visit, which lasted almost four hours, she met personally with all the women in Ward I, including those convicted of religious crimes, drug crimes and writing bad checks, and she studied the types of crime, lengths of sentence and the fines of the imprisoned women.

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In Ward I the prisoners are classified according to crime and age. The creation of a division for young women in this ward is praiseworthy. Prisoners under 20 years of age are kept in a separate room.

During this visit letters and requests for clemency for the prisoners were received by Ms Yazdi's companions so that the required measures can be taken by the judiciary's Women's Affairs Office if there are lawful ways to do so.

Likewise, news correspondents asked questions about the condition of prisoners and educational work for prisoners, and Mr Pishva, chief of Evin Prison, discussed educational work, including Koran classes, classes in morality and religious commands, and also literacy classes. There are also two carpet-weaving and sewing shops run by the prisoners. In return for their work they receive a wage and their fines are reduced.

Concerning the condition of the prisoners, Ms Yazdi told news correspondents that the prison was in a suitable state and that the classification of the prisoners in this division was an important measure.

She added that the lack of an emotional family relationship with children and youth, the lack of education, and in some cases financial poverty and false employment are important factors in the commission of crime. Most of the statistics on the women in this ward have to do with narcotics. Unfortunately, among them are also people with advanced educations and even specialist skills in some fields. All of these cases are object lessons showing that along with the acquisition of knowledge one must give sufficient attention to acquiring moral virtues and strengthening faith and piety.

At the end of the visit Ms Yazdi thanked the chief of Evin Prison and the official in charge of the women's ward for creating the educational environment that prevails in the prison, for creating employment for them, and for creating an exceptionally appropriate atmosphere in terms of emotions and sincerity. She said goodbye to the prisoners, expressing the hope that God will forgive the prisoners, that their requests for clemency will be accepted, and that these visits will be a positive step for finding the roots of crimes and reducing them in society.

Director Reports on Tehran Metro Construction

95LA0146E Tehran ABRAR in Persian 13 Feb 95 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] After overcoming several obstacles, Iran has completed construction of the first line of Tehran's metro system. This nation's officials are hoping it will go into operation by the beginning of the year 1997.

This 32-km metro line connects the northern residential area to the resting place in the south of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni, founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

According to Asghar Ebrahimi, director of the Tehran Metro Company, this metro line includes 15 km of tunnels and 27 km of open track.

It is expected that Line 1 will go into operation in 18 to 24 months after the installation of rails and markers and the completion of the work on some 20 stations along the route.

Ebrahimi said: Soon afterwards, Line 2 will be put into operation along a 62-km route from east to west in the capitol, which includes 20 km. The work on this line is already 80-percent complete.

He added: So far more than 350 billion rials [R] (about $130 million) has been spent on this project, and it is thought that an additional R750 billion will be spent. Another $430 million in foreign exchange will be needed to buy equipment abroad.

It is expected that this work will be able to help with the transport of Tehran's population of 11 million, many of whom face heavy traffic every day in a city that has grown tremendously in the last 15 years.

This project was begun in the year 1978 by the French company Sufruto [name as transliterated] that won in a $2 billion call for bids.

However, the work stopped in the year 1379 [21 March 1980-20 March 1981] after the triumph of the Islamic revolution, although 2,300 meters of tunnel had already been dug.

In the year 1986, in the heat of the war with Iraq and at a time when the country was in financial difficulties, officials decided to resume the project with the help of local companies.

Iran entered into negotiations with several countries and ultimately last year it chose China to procure and install the system of markers to organize and control traffic and also to provide the train cars.

Ebrahimi said: This project was designed by Iranian experts, and all of its construction and road-building engineering was done by local companies.

However, the 600-meter difference in elevation between north and south Tehran, with an average grade in the north of five percent, created problems.

The main problem was construction work on land with a high capacity to absorb water.

There were several accidents because of this, including a collapsed wall two years ago underneath one of Tehran's main squares, where several automobiles fell in and six people were killed.

Ebrahimi said: The tunnels and other construction tasks were designed in such a way that they can withstand earthquakes up to 7.9 on the Richter scale. This led to greater expense and prolonged the work.

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16 New Mines Discovered in Semnan Province

95LA0130A Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 16 Jan 95 p 5

[FBIS Translated Text] The general manager of mines and minerals in the Province of Semnan said: 16 new mines have been discovered this year in this province.

Engineer Mojtaba Shari'ati said: These mines include two celestite mines, one barite mine, eight sodium sulfite mines, three industrial clay mines, one rock iron mine, one rock copper mine and one hydrothermal silicone mine.

He said: These mines have a total of 529,500 tons of proven reserves.

According to him the estimated reserves at the celestite mines are 100,000 tons, they are 50,000 tons at the barite mine, 120,000 tons at the sodium sulfite mine, 67,000 tons at the rock iron mine, 82,000 tons at the rock copper mine, 106,000 tons at the industrial clay mine, and 4,500 tons at the hydrothermal silicone mine.

In conclusion this official said: Likewise this year 60 agreements in principle were signed with applicants in this province for exploring for reserves in the Province of Semnan.

Pakistan

Bhutto Reviews Karachi Situation at Meeting

BK2104071795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 21 Apr 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A high-level meeting presided over by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Karachi last evening took stock of law and order situation in the city. The meeting was attended by Sindh Chief Syed Abdullah Shah, Defense Minister Aftab Shaban Mirani and federal Law Minister N.D. Khan, besides high-ranking federal and provincial officials. It reviewed the progress made in the investigation of serious crimes during the last three months. These crimes included a shooting at a mosque and the killing of two Americans.

The prime minister emphasized the need to step up the investigation of cases and to ensure that they are pursued to their conclusion through the judicial process. Benazir Bhutto directed that reward money should be paid to those providing information without delay so that people will be encouraged to come forward and reveal names of criminals. The prime minister directed that highly professional lawyers be hired by the prosecution for securing convictions in the courts. The meeting considered reports about the growing misuse of mobile telephones in terrorist activities and directed that the decision made earlier to restrict the use of mobile telephones to only to those who pay income tax be implemented in letter and spirit. To speed up prosecution of cases, it was decided that departmental action will be taken against investigative officers who fail to appear before courts. Investigative officers who fail to appear before special courts to give evidence for suppression of terrorist activities will be suspended.

In Karachi, four bandits were killed during an encounter with police in the Ferozabad police station area yesterday. One police constable was also killed in the encounter. Four more bandits were arrested. The encounter began when the police surrounded a house whose residents had been taken hostage by the bandits. The police went into action on the instruction of monitoring cell set up at the Chief Minister's House, which received a telephone call about the presence of the bandits in the house. Later, Chief Minister Syed Abdullah Shah visited the house and met the courageous family members who refused to surrender to the bandits. He also expressed satisfaction over the timely action taken by the monitoring cell. Meanwhile, the security cell of the Sindh police has arrested four more terrorists of a big gang from the Defense Colony area in Karachi and recovered arms from their possession.

Leghari Views India's 'Brute Force' in Kashmir

BK2004140095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 20 Apr 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has called upon democratic countries of the world and nongovernmental organizations [NGO's] to stop India from use of brute force and gross violation of human rights in Kahsmir valley. He was talking to a five-member delegation of the German NGO's known as World Society of Victimology [as heard] who called on him in Islamabad today.

The president said more than 600,000 Indian troops had been brutalizing and victimizing the innocent Kashmiri people for the last five years but had failed to crush uprising for their just cause of self-determination. Pakistan wanted to have a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolution as there could not be any military solution of the problem. He further said that Pakistan was giving only moral and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri freedom fighters. He observed that once the Kashmiri problem has been peacefully resolved, both India and Pakistan could divert their scarce resources from defense expenditure to socioeconomic development and prosperity of about one billion people of their two countries.

Futility of 'Spurious' Talks With India Seen

BK2104063395 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 20 Apr 95

[Commentary by A.B.S. Jafri]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Talking to newsmen the other day, foreign minister of Pakistan, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, said Islamabad was willing to talk to India, but the agenda must include two non-papers sent to New Delhi

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pertaining to the modalities for holding a plebiscite on Jammu and Kashmir and for creating propitious climate for the holding of the plebiscite. His remarks have to be seen in the context of stalling tactics employed by India in nearly all previous India-Pakistan talks. Sometimes under external pressure and sometimes in order to portray itself as a peace-loving country, New Delhi goes through the motions of negotiations without the intention of giving serious consideration to core issues. A number of Pakistani diplomats, who attended these moots, described how their counterparts would drive them to the limits of patience by wasting all the time in trivial procedural wrangles in order to avoid tackling the real issues. Apart from that, the gentlemen across the border are reputed to be masters of placing red herrings of formalism as well as semantic and legal quibbling. All these ploys point to one conclusion, New Delhi comes to the table to stage a drama.

In these exercises, Pakistan suffers in several ways. First, the other side exploits these meetings for propaganda purposes and blames Pakistan for showing no interest in what it terms as bridge-building measures and for wanting to rush the substantive issues without creating necessary preconditions. As a result, Pakistan, which is the wronged party, grievously ends up being on the defensive. Secondly, the huge handshake and smiles between the two sides send wrong signals to the mojahedin in occupied Kashmir who are a life and death struggle. Meetings which bear no fruit tend to demoralize the freedom fighters. India plays up these talks precisely for that purpose.

Sardar Asif's remarks were prompted by a number of recent overtures emanating from New Delhi about bilateral talks. India watchers have also observed another trick in the matter. Whenever Indian atrocities in the valley evoke strong protests and concern among Western public, governments, and humanitarian lobbies, India makes studious overtures to deflect world attention from the oppression in the held-Kashmir. Sardar Asif has done the right by laying down stiff preconditions for the proposed talks. Looking at the ground realities, one has serious doubts whether India is willing now or in the foreseeable future to seek a negotiated settlement of the Kashmir dispute. New Delhi believes it can suppress the Kashmir liberation with brute force. As a second line of defense, it would invade Pakistan if Kashmir situation gets out of hand because the military balance is heavily in favor of New Delhi. That is why it is a viable option for New Delhi to externalize the problem. Also, the drawing tide of communalism will make it impossible for Mr. Rao to make necessary concessions to the people of Kashmir. For these reasons, Pakistan has everything to loose and nothing to gain from a spurious dialogue with India.

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